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President:	Mr. Bui The Giang	(Viet Nam)
	Austria	Mr. Lutterotti
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Koudougou
	China	Ms. He Fen
	Costa Rica	Mr. Guillermet
	Croatia	Mr. Skračić
	France	Mr. Gonnet
	Japan	Mr. Miyajima
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Elshakshuki
	Mexico	Mr. Puente
	Russian Federation	Mr. Chernenko
	Turkey	Mr. Erdoğdu
	Uganda	Ms. Kafeero
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Saltonstall
	United States of America	Mr. Donegan

Agenda

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on Women and peace and security (S/2009/465)

Letter dated 18 September 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2009/490)

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The meeting resumed at 3.10 p.m.

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Colombia, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: I wish to remind all speakers, as was indicated at the morning session, to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber. I thank participants for their understanding and cooperation.

I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): I congratulate Viet Nam on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October. I thank you, Sir, for organizing this debate. The concept paper (S/2009/490, annex) that your delegation has prepared on the needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations is quite useful. I also commend the Council for having adopted resolution 1889 (2009) earlier today.

Before proceeding, let me say how saddened I am at the news of the terrorist attack in Islamabad today against the facilities of the World Food Programme, which claimed the lives of five aid workers. We offer our deep condolences to the bereaved families.

As the Secretary-General pointed out in his report on peacebuilding (S/2009/304), and as highlighted in the concept paper, the period immediately following conflict is critical. What is done or fails to be done has enormous repercussions for the process of peace consolidation. That is why we must spare no effort to ensure that the needs and priorities of women and girls are properly dealt with from the earliest possible moment.

My delegation believes that, inasmuch as women and girls are particularly vulnerable in the context of armed conflict, post-conflict recovery strategies must make them a priority. Special attention must be given to those who were victims of sexual violence during the armed conflict. Although wars affect all, the personal humiliation brought about by sexual violence and, in many cases, the social stigma that follows tend to be particularly painful. National Governments, the United Nations system and civil society groups must redouble their efforts to help victims rehabilitate as much and as soon as possible.

That is not enough, however. Women are not merely victims to be protected. They must be acknowledged and empowered as central actors in the establishment of lasting peace. They must be involved in formulating and implementing reconstruction strategies on all fronts. In my capacity as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission's country-specific configuration on Guinea-Bissau, I have had the privilege of witnessing the extraordinary determination and vitality of the women of that country. There, as in many other countries, women play a central role. Without them recovery would be a much more difficult task. We must strive to ensure that the important part women play in the economy is also reflected in their political participation.

The Peacebuilding Commission has a relevant role to play in empowering women in post-conflict situations. My delegation was pleased to note that resolution 1888 (2009), adopted by the Council last week, reaffirms the Commission's role in that matter. In the case of Guinea-Bissau, I recall that women's groups made an important contribution to the preparation of the country's strategic framework for peacebuilding.

The Secretary-General's report on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) (S/2009/465) contains disturbing findings in several country-specific situations. Perpetrators of acts of violence and abuse must be promptly and effectively brought to justice if we want to avoid a cycle of continued impunity stimulating more violence.

The report, however, also brings good news. In particular, it is encouraging to see the manner in which so many organs of the United Nations system have committed themselves to implementing the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000). The progress made in the areas of training, capacity-building and awareness-raising is particularly notable. In this context I would like to mention what the report refers to as challenges that relate to the breadth of resolution 1325 (2000).

The task that we set for ourselves in that resolution is large and complex. To carry it out successfully requires a broad and coordinated approach among all of the relevant stakeholders within the United Nations system. In the same way that the Security Council is uniquely mandated to deal with the widespread or systematic use of sexual violence in armed conflicts, other bodies have mandates and specialized expertise that allow them to better address other aspects of the issue. We must continue to ensure coordination among all efforts undertaken in this regard and avoid duplication or overstepping of competencies. In this context, we welcome the adoption of General Assembly resolution 63/311.

Some of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report can also help in meeting the challenges we all face in further implementing resolution 1325 (2000). Among the suggestions, we see particular relevance in better data collection. Without credible information, we cannot act effectively or fairly. As my delegation indicated in the open debate held last August (see S/PV.6180), such data should be shared with other relevant principal organs and with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Commission on the Status of Women as appropriate, so as to ensure that international action is not merely punitive, but transformative as well.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Matussek (Germany): Germany aligns herself with the statement made by Sweden on behalf of the European Union. As a member of the Group of Friends of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), we attach great importance to the issue of women and peace and security. I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for holding this open debate.

Women and children need to be protected from violence. Every day, we bear witness to unspeakable atrocities. This is especially the case in post-conflict situations in which police protection does not exist and judicial systems lie in shatters. Institutions need to be rebuilt, but protection cannot wait until the systems are fully functional. Protection must take place from the very first minute of peacebuilding — for the benefit of the victims but also for the benefit of the whole community, since rape and sexual violence destroy the very components of societies. Thus, sustainable peace cannot be achieved without the protection of the most vulnerable, namely, women and children.

Women are not only victims of conflicts but powerful agents for peace and security. Therefore, the empowerment of women to fulfil this potential is of the utmost importance. The system of granting microcredits to women has proved successful within the context of development cooperation. Empowering women would also help in security sector reform as well as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes. Women need to be included in peace negotiations and in decision-making processes for rebuilding countries and societies after they have been torn apart by war. Only by including the gender perspective in these efforts can a thorough, sustainable and all-inclusive peace be achieved.

What can Member States do? I will give the Council just a few examples. Germany has advocated the inclusion of gender advisers in all European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) missions. The mission of the European Union-led peacekeeping force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo had, for the first time, such an adviser among its personnel. During Germany's presidency, gender advisers were part of all ESDP missions. Also, the deployment of female soldiers enhanced the success of operations. For example, the presence of female soldiers to check women and children at checkpoints proved to de-escalate the situation on the ground. In Cambodia, Germany supports a project of the Ministry of Women's and Veteran's Affairs that focuses on capacity-building and gender mainstreaming. Finally, all German police and military personnel must undergo gender training.

What can the United Nations do? Security Council resolution 1888 (2009) and resolution 1889 (2009), adopted today, are yet another milestone in the fight against sexual violence and for the empowerment of women for the maintenance of peace and security. We now have a whole range of tools available to prevent

sexual violence and to respond rapidly to situations in which violence occurs. The new composite gender entity that the General Assembly has decided to establish as part of system-wide coherence will help to coordinate these and all other instruments that already exist within the United Nations. I echo the presidency of the European Union in calling upon the Secretary-General and his Deputy to quickly start working on the establishment of this entity.

Let me suggest and reiterate three more targets. The United Nations needs to continue working together with women's non-governmental organizations on the ground in post-conflict areas. It has to strive to include more women in peacekeeping missions at all levels and to improve its own performance, but also to set an example for the countries concerned. And United Nations entities must expand their activities related to the delivery of basic services that women in post-conflict situations need, especially access to health care, education and justice systems.

Next year is the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). Let us try to reach these targets by that date so we will be able to proclaim some progress that will benefit and guide all people in the world that need our help and look to us for support.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Philippines.

Mr. Davide (Philippines): Thank you, Sir, for giving the Philippines this opportunity to address the Council on the ninth anniversary of the landmark Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). My delegation congratulates Viet Nam on its presidency of the Council and for giving priority to a debate on the issue of women and peace and security with the theme, "Responding to the needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations for sustainable peace and security" and for circulating a concept paper in relation thereto (S/2009/490). This debate will make a valuable contribution to the forthcoming commemoration of the fifteenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

The Philippines submits that any debate in the United Nations concerning women must always be rooted in the solemn declarations in its Charter that reaffirm faith in the equal rights of men and women and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which recognize that the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. This is the only strategy that removes us from mere sound and fury on so crucial an issue as women.

The role of women in matters of peace and security is particularly significant to the Philippines. It was under the leadership of our recently departed President Corazon Aquino, a woman and a housewife, that the Philippines emerged from a long dictatorship. She was a standard bearer for those who suffered under tyranny, and, having survived, became a symbol of strength and hope. This experience is enshrined in the provision of the 1987 Constitution of the Philippines that reads:

> "The State recognizes the role of women in nation-building, and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men".

This spirit continues to permeate the public sphere. The incumbent President is a woman, our second in approximately 25 years. The Supreme Court, during my tenure as Chief Justice, undertook unprecedented moves to ensure that women benefit equally from and participate directly in the judiciary's structures, processes and development programmes and activities. Just last August, the Congress of the Philippines passed a Magna Carta for Women, which mandates the representation and participation of women in policymaking.

We are currently conducting field consultations for a National Action Plan on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) in various regions of the Philippines. These consultations will culminate in a national consultation in Manila on 19 October 2009. The Philippine Action Plan on resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) will be the blueprint that various stakeholders will use to ensure that women are able to participate meaningfully in all peace processes and in decision-making on peace and security issues in both the formal and the informal realms.

We know that, in this time of asymmetric warfare, the use of sexual violence against women and girls as a weapon of war is a source of even more fundamental and pernicious concern. It is a weapon that is intended to humiliate and destroy women, both as individuals and as the heart and soul of social order and the foundation of family and community life. It should then follow that, within the peace and

reconstruction processes, women's voices must be indispensable in all phases. Women are often the primary figures in the education and upbringing of our children, and, therefore, the primary carriers of the effects of conflict through the generations. Without their voice of stability and sense of community, children grow up knowing only war as their livelihood.

Our present debate must not just be an occasion to celebrate the role of women. It must be a celebration of a shift in the international community's approach to post-conflict situations, from narrow humanitarian and relief activities to more comprehensive efforts towards sustainable peace. This means a greater focus on the concerns and roles of women in bridging the gap between conflict and post-conflict development. For my delegation, gender sensitivity in a post-conflict environment would mean paying due attention to women's access to employment opportunities and productive assets, such as land, capital, education and training and health services. It also means looking at the role of women in ensuring food security in the community, and making conditions at refugee settlements a priority. In short, the rehabilitative approach to post-conflict situations involves a serious consideration of the short- to long-term development needs of the community concerned.

My delegation welcomes the resolution that was just adopted by the Council. We are encouraged by, among other things, the efforts to improve the resource allocations for gender issues within the United Nations by enhancing the monitoring of spending for gender-related activities, similar to the system pioneered by the United Nations Development Programme. We are happy to note at last that, as evidenced by paragraph 19 of resolution 1889 (2009), a systematic assessment of the needs and challenges facing women and girls in post-conflict situations is being undertaken by the United Nations, whose report will also recommend possible responses, including in the area of effective financing.

It took a whole nine years after the passage of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000) for the Council to request a study on women's participation and inclusion in peacebuilding in the aftermath of a conflict. My delegation believes that such a report is long overdue and should therefore be given the promptest attention, if the United Nations is to urgently address the situation of the millions of women affected by the ravages of war.

I should like to conclude with these lines by a poet:

> "All true trophies of the ages
> Are from mother-love impearled;
> For the hand that rocks the cradle
> Is the hand that rules the world".

Mr. Clay (New Zealand): I join those who have congratulated you, Mr. President, on assuming the presidency of this Council. I note that New Zealand seeks the protection of women and their equal participation in peace processes. We thank you for having arranged this debate and we appreciate the opportunity to contribute.

This is the third consecutive month the Security Council has debated the issues of women, peace and security. We welcome that increased focus, in particular the attention given to the scourge of sexual violence. We commend the Council's readiness to address those issues more systematically. Only last week, New Zealand joined in co-sponsoring resolution 1888 (2009) in this Council. Along with resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1882 (2009), 1888 (2009) and the resolution that was adopted today, 1889 (2009), we have come a long way in developing a comprehensive set of norms to protect and enhance the participation of women and girls in peace processes.

Today, we lend a strong voice to calls urging States, regional groups and the United Nations system to translate those words into action. To do this, we recognize the need for stronger leadership and coordination across the United Nations system. We welcome two recent initiatives that should contribute to this goal. First is the future appointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General on sexual violence in armed conflict. And the second is the General Assembly's recent action to reform the United Nations gender architecture. We now urge the Secretary-General to appoint strong and dynamic advocates of the resolution 1325 (2000) agenda to the role of the new Special Representative and as head of the new composite gender entity.

As we focus more on sexual violence, we must also redouble our efforts to implement the other crucial aspects of resolution 1325 (2000) — increased participation of women both in peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions and in mediation and negotiation processes. To make a lasting impact on the lives of women in conflict and post-conflict situations,

we must adopt an integrated approach to each of the pillars of resolution 1325 (2000). To this end, the appointment of a Special Representative should provide much needed visibility, leadership and coherence. For this reason we believe the mandate of the Special Representative should cover all aspects of the women, peace and security agenda, not just the issue of sexual violence.

New Zealand acknowledges that States must also take responsibility for making progress towards the goals of resolution 1325 (2000), including enabling the full participation of women and girls in the peace process. Among other things, women need access to shelter, health care, a livelihood, education and justice. They should be part of any decision-making processes. And, above all, they must be free from violence.

New Zealand is committed to addressing these needs as part of its own peacekeeping efforts. There are several concrete examples of how we do this through our provincial reconstruction team in Bamiyan Province in Afghanistan. To facilitate the participation of women in Afghanistan's national police force, New Zealand police have helped ensure that on-site childcare services are available for women students, that women instructors are available for training, and that mentoring is provided to instructors and senior male staff in the Afghan National Police to support the training of women. Through the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, New Zealand supports the Women's Protection Network in Bamiyan. We have contributed funding to establish a Women's Referral Centre in Bamiyan to provide secure accommodation and paralegal advice for women seeking access to justice. New Zealand's provincial reconstruction team also supports the local Ministry of Women's Affairs in developing a gender network to look at ways to empower local women and build capacity for women's affairs in the region. Finally, our networking activities include disseminating information to women to help them solve their own problems, holding training workshops around the province and promoting discussion groups on issues such as the role of mothers in the home.

Nine years on from the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), much remains to be done. This Council has my assurance that New Zealand, through its development cooperation programmes, its peacekeeping efforts and its domestic policies, will continue to seek ways to enhance and ensure the protection and equal participation, of women in peace processes. Resolution 1325 (2000) has our ongoing, full and determined support.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Luxembourg.

Mr. Olinger (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): Luxembourg fully supports the statement made at this morning's meeting by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union and congratulates the Vietnamese presidency of the Council on having organized today's important debate.

We also welcome today's adoption of resolution 1889 (2009), as well as resolutions 1882 (2009) and 1888 (2009) on women and children in armed conflict. Today's open debate marks yet another anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, the first resolution adopted by the Council that specifically addresses the impact of war on women and recognizes their role in conflict management and resolution and their contribution to the search for lasting peace.

Unfortunately, we are compelled to note that progress in the implementation of the recommendations therein remains insufficient. 2010 will be an especially important year, for it will afford us an opportunity — at the commemoration of the fifteenth anniversary of the Beijing Conference and of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), as well as at the ministerial session of the Economic and Social Council on the empowerment of women — to take stock of the work accomplished and above all to identify and effectively remedy shortcomings. We further hope that 2010 will see the establishment of the composite gender entity under the Secretariat. We are convinced that the timely creation of the entity will considerably strengthen the cohesiveness of measures undertaken for women in the United Nations system.

Women and girls are often the primary victims of conflict and have specific needs in post-conflict situations, especially when they have been displaced, are refugees, or have been mistreated or maimed by anti-personnel landmines, as so rightly noted by Ms. Alberdi this morning. Those specific needs must be taken into account in assessing countries' requirements as they emerge permanently from conflict. In post-conflict situations, women must become important engines for peace and security in

their communities. It is indeed critical that women be more involved in peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts at all levels. The involvement of women in decision-making processes from the start should subsequently provide for their better participation in development efforts.

Generally speaking, Luxembourg fully endorses the Secretary-General's recommendations in his report (S/2009/465) on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). My country especially welcomes the recommendation that the Security Council energetically pursue a strategy aimed at increasing the participation of women in all peace processes, especially within the framework of peace negotiations and mediation.

Member States will have to demonstrate the political will to fully implement resolution 1325 (2000). It is especially incumbent on them to utilize all existing provisions of international law, international humanitarian law and international criminal law, as well as not to tolerate impunity and to refer to national and international tribunals individuals suspected of having committed crimes against women. The Security Council could assist States in their efforts to implement resolution 1325 (2000) by establishing, as recommended by the Secretary-General, a clear and exhaustive standing follow-up mechanism that would enable us to assess progress achieved.

Luxembourg also stresses the important role that the Peacebuilding Commission could play in encouraging all parties, including States on its agenda, to provide for the participation of women in their peacebuilding strategies and to ensure that women's civil society organizations be effectively consulted and represented in country-specific configurations. We could also ensure that the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council launch a dialogue on the best way to address the negative impacts of conflict on women and consider how to involve women in full participation in peacebuilding efforts and post-conflict reconstruction.

My country strives for the systematic incorporation of the gender dimension in its cooperation projects in order to better to respond to the Millennium Development Goals, and fully backs the peace initiatives taken by local women's groups and the exhaustive work of non-governmental organizations to ensure the equal participation of women in post-conflict situations. We welcome the participation in this debate of the representative of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

The President: I call on the representative of Canada.

Mr. Normandin (Canada) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, on behalf of the Government of Canada, I wish to thank the Vietnamese presidency for convening this open debate on resolution 1325 (2000). Addressing the needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations is a critical element of the Security Council's responsibilities.

As we know, the needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations are unique and, sadly, often overlooked. Today's adoption of resolution 1889 (2009) is a response to a significant body of research findings that reinforce what we have always known — achieving durable peace, recovery and development in post-conflict countries requires the meaningful participation of women in all aspects and at all levels of peace processes. Only a strong and sustained voice will allow women in post-conflict environments to transcend the status of victim and become empowered as agents of positive change. We call on the Security Council to ensure that their voices are heard loud and clear.

In particular, Canada would like to draw the Council's attention to the participation of women in peace processes and to a study by the United Nations Development Fund for Women, which has already been referred to today, concluding that the participation of women in negotiating delegations to peace talks has averaged approximately 7 per cent. Member States, the Secretariat and international peace mediators collectively share the responsibility to ensure that this number increases and that we systematically include women in all peace processes, formal and informal. Canada sincerely hopes that the Security Council and the Secretariat will ensure that this becomes a standard practice.

Canada co-sponsored both resolutions 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009) on sexual violence in conflict. Both resolutions elaborate on resolution 1325 (2000) by outlining a number of concrete steps to be taken to address sexual violence more systematically. Canada welcomes the call for the nomination of a special representative of the Secretary-General to provide strategic leadership and to strengthen United Nations

coordination mechanisms in order to address sexual violence.

Canada also warmly welcomes the recommendations set out in the Secretary-General's recent report (S/2009/465) on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). In particular, Canada would like to echo the Secretary-General's calls for an effective monitoring and accountability mechanism with respect to all aspects of resolution 1325 (2000), in particular the participation of women in peace processes.

(*spoke in English*)

The implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is indeed a work in progress, both at a national level and at the United Nations. With the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) approaching next year, it is time to undertake a serious examination of the gains that have been made as well as those aspects of the resolution that remain unrealized.

On the positive side, there have been some remarkable accomplishments by the many dedicated actors who pursue the promotion and protection of women's and girls' rights, including the efforts of civil society organizations. On the other hand, we are still short on some institutional mechanisms and action. In this respect, the upcoming establishment of a steering committee to enhance coordination within the United Nations system ahead of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the resolution is welcome.

Currently, there are 13 full-time gender advisers in United Nations peacekeeping operations, including integrated missions. Every United Nations mission should have a well-trained, full-time gender adviser whose work is systematically integrated throughout the operation and who has stable resources to carry out his or her functions. By now, this should be standard practice. We also welcome the call for the appointment of women protection advisers, issued in resolution 1889 (2009), adopted earlier today.

I should like to say A few words on the peacebuilding front. The Peacebuilding Commission holds much promise for involving women and girls in designing and then operationalizing post-conflict strategies. In accordance with resolution 1820 (2008), each of the four countries currently on the agenda have strategies for engaging women in governance, security sector reform, human rights institutions and other key areas of post-conflict reconstruction. As chair of the Commission's country configuration for Sierra Leone, Canada has worked with the Government of Sierra Leone and its international partners to ensure that gender equality and the empowerment of women are core components of peacebuilding efforts in that country.

Finally, we would also like to raise the issue of bringing violators to justice with respect to sexual violence. As we all know, this type of violence remains rampant in conflict-affected areas. Too often, these crimes go unpunished and therefore perpetuate the cycle of sexual violence. To this end, Canada reiterates the call made in resolution 1888 (2009) for a team of rapidly deployable experts on sexual violence and suggests that a United Nations justice rapid-response mechanism be considered as we move towards the implementation of this commitment.

In conclusion, a peace that lasts is a peace owned by all, including women. As we approach the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we can acknowledge the progress made towards its implementation. We can also recognize that more must be done. Global indicators to track implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), as called for in today's resolution, will be helpful in this regard. But let us not wait further. We need to continue to act now, particularly in the field, to make the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) a reality.

The President: I now call on the representative of Norway.

Mr. Wetland (Norway): Thank you, Mr. President, for allowing us to speak.

What a difference a year can make! Eight years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the Security Council was still debating whether sexual violence was an issue of relevance to peace and security. Then came resolution 1820 (2008), which made it abundantly clear that where women are not secure, there is no security. Still, the international community was for too long somewhat ambivalent and indecisive with regard to implementation and action on the ground — until last week.

Today, the Council has adopted an important resolution, but let me also congratulate it on the unanimous adoption of resolution 1888 (2009), with its comprehensive yet concrete recommendations for

action. This is truly a piece of work the Council can be proud of.

What happened was leadership. In the past few months, we have seen how men — and, even more, women — in high and powerful positions have taken a decision to make the fight against sexual violence in armed conflict their top priority. Two lessons are clear from this. First, where there is political will, there is a way, and, secondly, women in power positions can make a difference for the better.

One year before the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the time has now come for the Council and the international community to show the same resolve on other remaining challenges in the promotion of women and peace and security. Women must be recognized not only as victims of war and peace beneficiaries, but most importantly as peace and security providers. We therefore welcome this open debate to set the course for the next 12 months, a course not littered with re-commitments and repeated regrets, but one that spells out specific results to be achieved and to be measured by October 2010.

We support the Secretary-General's call for the Council to urgently establish a monitoring mechanism for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Such a mechanism must have clear indicators and benchmarks, including with regard to women's participation at all levels of peacekeeping, peacebuilding, post-conflict negotiations and mediation. Measuring financial investments and gender-sensitive funding provisions is also crucial in this regard.

However, while such monitoring is needed and welcome, the fundamental facts are already well known. Women are underrepresented, women's needs are underfunded and gender-sensitive expertise is lacking, both in the field and in capitals. As the United Nations Development Fund for Women points out in its excellent study of post-conflict needs assessments, a mere 2 per cent of signatories to peace agreements are women, while less than 8 per cent of post-conflict budgets specifically mention women's needs.

This must change, and Norway stands ready to continue our contribution. This year alone, we have allocated more than $50 million specifically for women's empowerment, of which the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is a key component. Implementing our own national action plan since early 2006, we have identified a number of lessons learned. Key among these is the recognition of the need to address traditional impediments, including male chauvinism, and to take proactive political and financial measures to involve women directly, both in formal governance structures and in cooperation with civil society. We have established a dedicated gender task force in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to mainstream these concerns in all aspects of our foreign policy, including the follow-up to resolution 1325 (2000).

Such an approach is equally relevant to the United Nations system. We appreciate the Secretary-General's dedication to gender equality and women's empowerment and would encourage him to confirm his leadership on this issue, both in ensuring the establishment of the new composite gender entity agreed by the General Assembly last month and in his appointment of special representatives and special envoys. The appointment of a gender adviser in the Department of Political Affairs would also be most welcome.

The President: I now call on the representative of Ireland.

Ms. Anderson (Ireland): Our warm thanks go to Viet Nam for organizing this debate.

We associate ourselves with Sweden in its statement on behalf of the European Union (EU) this morning.

I might begin with a personal recollection. Almost 17 years ago, in December 1992, I went to the former Yugoslavia as a member of the EU mission to investigate the rape of women during the Balkan conflict. The experience left a deep imprint on all who participated. It was the end of any illusion that barbarity is confined to faraway places. There, in the heart of Europe on the threshold of the twenty-first century, rape was once again an instrument of war. In an article written with a colleague after that mission, we discussed a number of aspects of what had happened. We included the following point: "A distribution of roles whereby men negotiate peace in Geneva while women devise aid programmes for victims is fundamentally unacceptable."

That issue of roles and responsibilities remains central to our consideration today. It is imperative that the duality of women's situation — as both victims and

actors — be fully recognized. Men have always inhabited those two spaces simultaneously — as victims and victors, waging the wars and authoring the peace. Women have largely been imprisoned in the victim role, as the collateral damage of war and, if present at all, a kind of add-on at the peace table.

Resolution 1325 (2000), which has been on the books for nine years, is trying to overthrow the patterns of centuries. The story recurs again and again, with the fundamentals almost always the same. Men who have been in the front line of conflict feel they have earned the exclusive right to broker the peace. Women who are struggling to get hearth and home together after the fighting have other priorities. Implementing resolution 1325 (2000) therefore means climbing mountains. To get to first base camp, we need real, transformative and attitudinal change.

I was struck by a comment made by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton at a breakfast meeting during the high-level segment of the General Assembly. Secretary Clinton said that she is repeatedly questioned by the United States media about why she is spending so much time on "secondary, soft" issues such as women in conflict. She has had to explain, she said, for the millionth time that those issues are not secondary but primary and that they are core foreign policy issues. The Secretary of State's experience captures a reality: so many commentators, analysts and opinion-formers do not truly rate the kind of discussion we are having today. The nod of political correctness is there, but not the conviction or prioritization that the issues deserve.

Overall, the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/465) makes for sober reading. There are some bright spots, in particular on the training front, and all successes deserve recognition and commendation. But the statistics — to take just one example, only 2.4 per cent of signatories to peace agreements since 1992 have been women — tell their own story.

In searching for practical ways forward, the Secretary-General's report rightly emphasizes the importance of national plans. Ireland is currently developing its own national action plan. As part of that process, we have embarked on a cross-learning initiative guided by the experiences of women and men in countries emerging from conflict. We are currently working in partnership with Liberia and Timor-Leste in a tripartite cross-learning exercise. Through that collaboration, our aim is to ensure the achievement of real and immediate change for women who have experienced conflict and who can and should be stakeholders in State-building and peacebuilding. A first cross-learning meeting was held in June 2009, a second is to be held in Timor-Leste this December and a third is proposed for Liberia in early 2010. A report on the process will be shared with the United Nations in advance of the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000).

A further effort to stimulate cross-regional discussion on implementing resolution 1325 (2000) was the hosting in Dublin earlier this year of the ministerial meeting of the Human Security Network. The Permanent Representative of Costa Rica described that initiative in his statement this morning, and I will not repeat what he has said.

A final point is the importance of coordination. Within the United Nations system there should be a one-stop shop to offer guidance and advice to Member States in drawing up national plans. We suggest that the Inter-Agency Task Force on Women, Peace and Security be asked to identify such a focal point. At the national level, too, there is a role for focal points to provide drive and leadership. In Ireland Nuala O'Loan, a distinguished woman of wide and very relevant experience, has been appointed to the role of special envoy on women, peace and security. Perhaps that model could be of relevance elsewhere.

None of us here is in any doubt about the scale of the challenge and the urgency of action. Next year's tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) is an opportunity to be seized — not for another talkfest but to assess, strategize and commit. In the collective effort to prepare for and mark that anniversary, we look to the Security Council to continue to show leadership and determination.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

Mr. Cornado (Italy): I would like, first of all, to commend you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Let me also thank Deputy Secretary-General Migiro, Assistant Secretary-General Mayanja, Executive Director Alberdi and Ms. Amin.

Italy aligns itself with the position expressed by Sweden on behalf of the European Union.

Tragically, sexual violence continues to be used with impunity as a weapon of war to destroy the very fabric of society in many conflicts in the world. That has to stop. As Secretary of State Clinton said in this Chamber just a few days ago (see S/PV.6195), the dehumanizing nature of sexual violence erodes social and political stability, undermines economic progress and holds us all back.

Italy has committed itself to make this issue one the top priorities of its international action. In the framework of the Italian presidency of the Group of Eight (G-8), on 9 and 10 September my Government convened an international conference in Rome on the issue of violence against women. In the presidency's conclusions of that meeting, we clearly stated that violence against women and girls is a war crime and a crime against humanity. The participants committed themselves to strive to ensure the fullest possible implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), not least to eliminate the sense of impunity that is still widespread among the perpetrators of such crimes.

The use of sexual violence as a war tactic is clearly a global emergency. In the past year and a half, the Security Council has shown remarkable leadership in this field. With hindsight, we can say that the adoption of resolution 1820 (2008) was indeed a watershed moment. It clearly established that sexual violence in situations of armed conflict, when used as a tactic of war, is a matter of peace and security, and very much the business of the Council. Italy is proud to have been one of the sponsors of that landmark resolution and to have actively contributed to its drafting.

Resolution 1820 (2008) brought about a better understanding of the implications of sexual violence as a weapon of war, thus opening the way for the Council to adopt two other important resolutions: resolution 1882 (2009) and, only last week, resolution 1888 (2009). Both provide the Council with important and effective new tools to end impunity and to hold accountable the perpetrators of those heinous crimes. It is now up to the Council to use those tools and implement the resolutions in full and without delay.

We encourage the Working Group of the Security Council on Children and Armed Conflict to use the full array of means at its disposal to deal with parties responsible for rape and sexual violence against children. We look forward to the Secretary-General's early appointment of a special representative for women and peace and security to provide much-needed leadership, coordination and advocacy. We are also convinced of the importance of finding ways to ensure better and more detailed reporting to the Council, primarily with regard to the identity of the parties responsible for these grave violations.

Women's security must be guaranteed. Abuses must be prosecuted. Blanket amnesties must be off the table. But the protection of women is just one pillar of resolution 1325 (2000). Women are agents of change and fundamental players for peace, stabilization, reconstruction and sustainable development. That was one of the key messages of resolution 1325 (2000). What we need now is to move with equal determination to achieve similar progress in empowering women and ensuring their effective and equal participation in every phase of peacemaking, conflict prevention, peace processes and peacebuilding.

As stated in the conclusions of the presidency at the G-8 meeting in Rome, to which I have referred, global peace and security also depend on women's actions and on their participation under conditions of equality in social development and governance mechanisms at local, national and world levels. The resolution that the Council has adopted today, resolution 1889 (2009), is the first important step in that direction, and we commend Viet Nam for taking this initiative.

The role of women is particularly important in peacebuilding efforts, as recognized by the specific gender mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission. After a conflict, women are often victims of heinous abuses and can be irrationally stigmatized for the violence they have suffered. At the same time, they are the pillars of families that need to be put back together and of societies that need to be rebuilt. They are the educators of future generations, partners in the reintegration of ex-combatants, mothers of fatherless children, the only dynamic economic actors in a ravaged society. For those reasons, a peace that is built without considering the needs and hopes of women cannot be a lasting one.

As we have said time and time again, this is not just a question of how many women are included in the political and decision-making process; it is about enabling them to champion issues that are vital to their

empowerment. This is possible only through the full engagement of civil society and women's organizations, which is why resource, training and capacity-building needs must always be given full consideration. The United Nations has an important contribution to make in ensuring, for instance, that the participation of women is better reflected in peacekeeping mission mandates, and that those missions are provided with much-needed expertise and resources, including through the inclusion of a gender component in all of its peacekeeping and political missions.

Let me conclude by reaffirming Italy's firm commitment to the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and to promoting women's participation and empowerment. We have made this a priority both in our political action and in our development cooperation. To that end, we have funded a number of projects of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) focused on implementing resolution 1325 (2000) in West Africa, and we have started the process of drafting a national action plan. As one of the main troop contributors to United Nations peacekeeping, we have an important role to play in ensuring that resolution 1325 (2000) is mainstreamed in all United Nations missions.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Ms. Taj (United Republic of Tanzania): We wish to join other delegations in commending the delegation of Viet Nam, led by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, for organizing this important debate. Today's debate further attests to the need for the Security Council to continue to be seized of the challenges of protecting women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations. We also thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2009/465). We welcome the recommendations contained therein and call for their implementation. We also support his recommendation for a high-level ministerial event to commemorate the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), although we would have preferred the event to be held at a higher level. Let me also at this juncture thank the Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Asha Rose Migiro, for her commitment to advancing women's rights, which was affirmed in her statement this morning.

We also appreciate the contributions made by Ms. Mayanja, Ms. Alberdi and Ms. Amin, as well as various other actors, in particular the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization and various non-governmental organizations for their efforts in implementing resolution 1325 (2000).

We are concerned that despite several measures being undertaken in response to resolution 1325 (2000), progress in implementing it is still limited, and women and girls continue to suffer the brunt of war, particularly the devastating effects of sexual and gender-based violence. It is our expectation that the appointment of a special representative of the Secretary-General, as provided for in Security Council resolution 1888 (2009), will add impetus to the United Nations work in fighting the horrendous acts of violence committed against women and girls, as well as boys. We also expect that the appointment of the special representative will not shift resources from a holistic approach to the issue of women and peace and security, one of participation, protection and prevention. We deeply deplore the use of sex as a weapon of war and call for concerted efforts to end impunity.

We need to ensure the promotion and enjoyment of human rights for all people, and in particular women and girls living in situations of conflict. Access to education, health and other humanitarian assistance is a basic human right; we thus strongly condemn those parties to conflict who destroy schools, health facilities and humanitarian supplies, and those who prevent girls' and women's access to education. The Security Council must consider taking actions against such parties, including targeted sanctions, and must insist on people's unhindered access to humanitarian personnel and humanitarian assistance.

Furthermore, as part of the conflict-resolution and peacebuilding process, the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission must ensure that resources are provided to restore the rule of law and strengthen the judicial and law-enforcement systems. Mechanisms also have to be in place to take to task all those who have been involved in violations of human rights.

Women's involvement is necessary to ensure the legitimacy of the decision-making process, to encourage a broad base of participation, to make sustainable peace and development possible and to protect women and girls. The implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), as well as of subsequent resolutions on women and peace and security, is a necessary tool for promoting the involvement of women. We also wish to underscore that we can produce a positive impact on the lives of women and children by implementing these resolutions in tandem with the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

The United Nations must set an example in its advocacy of women's participation by the appointment of more women to senior leadership positions in the Organization, including in areas dealing with conflict resolution and peacebuilding. At the grass-roots level, we need to address the causes of the lack of women's participation in peace processes, and to empower women's groups socially, politically and economically. We further recommend that Security Council members meet with local women's groups during all missions that the Council undertakes.

Let me conclude by reiterating the commitment of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania to addressing the challenges faced by women and children in conflict situations and promoting and protecting their human rights. We also wish to express our support for resolution 1889 (2009), which the Council adopted today.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Switzerland.

Mrs. Grau (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this debate, as well as the seminar on resolution 1325 (2000), which your country held in Hanoi in July, and which Switzerland had the pleasure of supporting. I would also like to associate myself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Human Security Network.

Today's debate is the eighth on the subject held since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). The Security Council has adopted seven presidential statements concerning its implementation. On one of the key aspects of this resolution — sexual violence in armed conflict — we have seen impressive progress. I refer here to resolution 1820 (2008), and, very recently, resolution 1888 (2009), which were adopted as a result of the commitment of the United States of America and which should now be implemented. Generally speaking, the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) remains unsatisfactory. The facts and figures set out in various studies, including by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), speak for themselves.

The question thus remains: how can we ensure that the agenda effectively moves forward and that what we have committed ourselves to implementing is actually implemented?

First, Switzerland recently evaluated its 2007 national action plan and continues to improve that instrument. Thanks to our pool of experts, we will increase the number of female personnel seconded to peacekeeping operations and as mediators. We will improve gender training in all aspects of our foreign policy, including in our programmes to promote peace and development cooperation. Switzerland is pleased to share its experiences with other countries and partners.

Secondly, as a member of the Group of Friends of 1325, chaired by Canada, Switzerland will actively support the preparations for the tenth anniversary. However, if we want to have a reason to celebrate, a strategic approach and an intelligent agenda are required. It is essential to enhance the responsibility of the Council, to increase the leadership in this area and to improve overall follow-up on the resolution.

To that end, the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, in close cooperation with Switzerland, has developed a concept for monitoring the resolution's implementation. This initiative, entitled "Accountability and Action for the Tenth Anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325", will include monthly assessments of all Council actions and, by means of concrete proposals, will contribute to the systematic implementation of the resolution. However, if this project is to be successful, more partners will be required. We invite all States to join our efforts by providing political and/or financial support.

Thirdly, the Council already has excellent instruments at its disposal. The mainstreaming of gender aspects in all peacekeeping operations, the consistent use of the sanctions regime and the

establishment of a strong, high-level gender unit are key elements for improving the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

We must think about how the Council can use existing instruments more strategically and even about establishing new ones. The informal expert group on the protection of civilians in armed conflict could address the resolution's prevention aspects. As far as protection is concerned, the model mechanism developed for children under resolutions 1612 (2005) and 1882 (2009), combined with new instruments provided for in resolution 1888 (2009), is a promising example. A pool of experts or a commission for the promotion of women to high positions could respond to the resolution's aspect of strengthening the role of women.

There is much work ahead of us. Let us begin today, here and together.

The President: I now call on the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Kim Bonghyun (Republic of Korea): Allow me to open my statement by thanking the Vietnamese presidency of the Security Council for the concept paper distributed for this open debate (S/2009/490). My appreciation goes also to the Secretary-General for his excellent report (S/2009/465), which provides a comprehensive outlook on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), as well as sound suggestions for specific actions to take.

We welcome the adoption of resolution 1889 (2009) this morning, which reiterates the commitment of the Security Council to the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and other important relevant resolutions, including resolutions 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009).

As the Secretary-General's report states, there has been progress in some areas of the implementation of the resolution over the past year. For example, major strides have been made in developing national action plans. The cooperation and collaboration among various partners — including United Nations entities such as the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) — in developing national action plans in various post-conflict areas is commendable. Some best-practice examples, such as the Liberian case, can guide the development of future action plans.

That is certainly a positive element, but the report also illustrates a number of persisting difficulties in the implementation of the resolution. Let me focus on three key points.

The first concerns sexual violence. We are all aware of how serious the situation is and how difficult it can be to reverse the extent and impact of sexual violence. In that regard, my delegation welcomes resolution 1888 (2009), adopted just five days ago, which identifies specific steps that the United Nations and Member States should take to prevent or respond to sexual violence. We expect that the appointment of a special representative of the Secretary-General and the rapid deployment of an expert team will make significant contributions to our efforts to end sexual violence.

The second point concerns the persistent lack of participation by women throughout the peace process, which is a core element of resolution 1325 (2000). As the Secretary-General's report expresses, a persistent cause of concern is that women continue to be virtually absent from the peace table and to be severely underrepresented as third-party mediators in most conflict-affected countries. It should be duly noted that since 1992, only 2.4 per cent of signatories to peace agreements were women and that no woman has ever been appointed as a chief mediator.

The Republic of Korea urges Member States and the Untied Nations to take more vigorous initiatives to ensure that women are engaged in all levels of decision-making. In that regard, we commend Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's response to the call in resolution 1325 (2000) to increase the number of women in senior positions within the United Nations, especially in peacekeeping operations. It is encouraging to see three women heads of mission, six women deputies in the field and five female under-secretaries-general and assistant secretaries-general in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. We encourage the Secretary-General to further strengthen this positive trend, and we hope that his efforts are emulated in peace negotiations and reconstruction

processes at the country level by ensuring the full participation of women.

The third point concerns a deficit in post-conflict funding for women's needs. As stated in the concept paper, UNIFEM's review of almost 17,000 projects in consolidated and flash appeals for 23 post-conflict countries over three years indicates that less than 3 per cent of projects submitted for funding explicitly target gender issues. Additionally, only 8 per cent of proposed budgets for post-conflict situation need assessments included specific elements addressing women's needs. As a way to address that gap, my delegation urges the United Nations system to further integrate the gender perspective in designing and implementing assistance programmes.

One area in which United Nations entities can immediately do more is the utilization of quick-impact projects. These are intended to meet urgent community needs in post-conflict areas but are generally underimplemented in many mission stationing fields, not to mention the fact that the gender perspective is rarely integrated into those projects under implementation. Since one of the main features of the quick-impact projects is to encourage a gender- and age-based approach, United Nations missions and UNDP have the potential to fully activate quick-impact projects to meet the urgent needs of women.

My delegation believes that the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) largely depends on the overall capacity of the United Nations system to pursue gender equality and women's empowerment. In that regard, strengthening the gender architecture is a key element. We are very much looking forward to the early establishment of a composite entity, which will be a driving force in creating an environment for the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in support of the efforts of the Security Council.

In conclusion, the Republic of Korea shares the expectations for the upcoming tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) in 2010. We anticipate that the anniversary will provide a new opportunity for all stakeholders to strengthen efforts to fully implement resolution 1325 (2000) to achieve real and lasting changes in the lives of women and girls.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa.

Ms. Rulumeni (South Africa): Allow me to express our sincere gratitude to you, Mr. President, for organizing this debate on such an important matter. South Africa welcomes the open debate and believes that it is also timely, leading the processes in preparation for the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security in 2010. South Africa aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of the African Union (AU) later today.

Resolution 1325 (2000) was adopted nine years ago. Consistent with the resolution, the theme today is "Responding to the needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations for sustainable peace and security". It is designed to examine how Member States and international and regional organizations could further improve women's participation in all stages of peace processes, particularly in conflict resolution, post-conflict planning and peacebuilding, including by enhancing their engagement in decision-making in the early stages of recovery processes. While women may be the first casualties of war, they remain active agents of change and play a meaningful role in the recovery and reintegration of their families. Women are also instrumental in bringing about democracy and reconciliation in post-conflict societies.

The African Union and subregional organizations offer several advantages in the pursuit of effective conflict prevention and resolution. Therefore, the Assembly of the African Union, in its efforts to promote the participation of women in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and security, has taken concrete steps and pledged that the organs of the AU and the regional economic communities and member States, using the frameworks of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), will integrate gender policies, programmes and activities on conflict and peace. That would ensure that women participate fully in conflict resolution and management processes.

Subregionally, gender equality and the empowerment of women are among the founding principles of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and are enshrined in the SADC Treaty. We have been greatly honoured by the leadership and important contribution of women in recent peace processes and negotiations in our region. On 17 August 2008, the SADC heads of State signed the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, which has been hailed as an important step towards the

empowerment of women, the elimination of discrimination and the achievement of gender equality and equity.

In the context of peace and security, the Protocol stipulates that the States parties shall endeavour to put in place measures to ensure that women have equal representation and participation in key decision-making positions in conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes by 2015, in accordance with resolution 1325 (2000). Furthermore, the Protocol specifies that States parties shall, during times of armed conflict, take such steps as are necessary to prevent and eliminate incidences of human rights abuses, especially of women and children, and also to ensure that the perpetrators of such abuses are brought to justice before courts of competent jurisdiction.

There is an urgent need to advocate more strongly for the equal participation and full involvement of women in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. We also believe that all actors to the binding resolution should devote their attention to ensuring sufficient resources, the capacity to address the challenges and empowerment through educational programmes so as to increase the awareness and understanding of how to find lasting solutions. We encourage Member States to finalize and concretize national action plans for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) that provide for the necessary training of women and men alike.

South Africa continues to support the work of the United Nations and of the African Union in promoting the equal participation and full involvement of women in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, as well as in protecting women and girls against sexual violence. From our experience in the SADC region, we have learned that it is important to build solidarity among all role players, particularly women, and therefore we remain committed to working within a consultative and collaborative framework to find peaceful and lasting solutions to conflicts.

To that end, we believe it important for women in local communities to be allowed to participate in finding solutions for the reconstruction and rebuilding of their countries. The importance of equal representation and participation of women in formal peace processes and at negotiating tables cannot be overemphasized.

The primary responsibility for preventing and protecting women and girls in conflict situations and their aftermath should not lie with the international community alone. That would assist in promoting local ownership in peace processes. South Africa remains committed to the full and effective implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009). We in the international community have an obligation to women to ensure that their rights are protected and that their place in all aspects of the peace process is assured.

In conclusion, my delegation will continue to support the work of the United Nations and of the African Union in promoting the equal participation and full involvement of women in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, as well as in protecting women and girls in post-conflict situations and their aftermath.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Finland.

Mr. Viinanen (Finland): The representative of Sweden has already spoken on behalf of the European Union presidency, and I associate myself fully with his statement. I have the honour of making a few additional remarks.

Nine years ago, the Security Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000) for the protection of women, for their participation and for the promotion of their rights in conflict and post-conflict situations. Last year, the Council adopted resolution 1820 (2008), condemning sexual violence as a tactic of war, and last week it adopted resolution 1888 (2009) to further strengthen the United Nations response to sexual violence in conflict. We welcome recent developments and the resolution adopted today, resolution 1889 (2009), which draws our attention to the crucial question of women's empowerment and participation in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Mr. President, you have chosen a very pertinent focus for this open debate on women and peace and security. Building sustainable peace requires much more than the mere absence of violence. Restoration of the rule of law, the local economy and basic services should be the priority in any post-conflict situation. This should happen alongside meeting the obvious need to ensure everyone's physical safety and security, which includes freedom from fear of sexual violence or harassment.

After a violent conflict, women are often the best experts in identifying the most crucial needs of their communities. Their experience, knowledge and determination are needed for the markets to start buzzing with life again, for the children to go to school and for the community to heal. Yet, women are still too often left out of the peace negotiations and the following processes where priorities and budgets for early recovery and peacebuilding are planned and decided upon. Finland emphasises the right of women to fully participate in post-conflict peacebuilding.

We do not only need to make sure that we have women present at the table at all levels of decision-making. We should consider working towards agreeing on international standards regarding participation of women and men in peace and post-conflict processes. We also need to make sure that women can fully use their potential, skills and leadership to foster quick and sustainable recovery and peacebuilding. To that end, Finland, together with Liberia, convened the International Colloquium for Women's Empowerment, Leadership, Development and International Peace and Security in Monrovia last March.

The United Nations plays a unique role in conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. However, during the 60 years of United Nations peacekeeping, no more than seven women have served as Special Representatives of the Secretary-General in the field. No woman has ever been nominated as a lead mediator in a peace process led by the United Nations. This has to change. We, the United Nations Member States, need to ensure that the change takes place.

We urge the United Nations to lead by example. We commend the Secretary-General for his efforts to increase the number of women in senior leadership positions, and we encourage him to break even more ground in the years to come. We welcome the call, in the resolution just adopted, to the Secretary-General to develop a strategy to that end. The Secretary General should ensure that all his envoys and representatives include women in all formal peace processes they lead. They should actively seek the views of women also outside of the formal negotiations. Furthermore, we encourage the United Nations, together with the World Bank and relevant regional organisations, to include a requirement for women's participation in the standards of post-conflict needs assessments and to track gender-specific budget allocations.

Next year will mark the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). There has been progress in its implementation, but a lot of work remains to be done before our commitments are fulfilled.

The unanimous decision by the General Assembly, in its resolution 63/311, to create a new gender entity was long awaited worldwide. Now we must set up the ambitious goal of having the new entity up and running by mid-2010. This will be a key step forward in enhancing the effective contribution by the United Nations to the promotion of women's rights and participation worldwide, including in conflict and post-conflict situations.

The recent adoption of resolution 1888 (2009) and its request for the appointment of a special representative of the Secretary-General to provide leadership and improve coherence and coordination of United Nations action against sexual violence in conflict was a major step forward. Ensuring full participation and rights of women and girls is the best way to prevent sexual violence, and the mandate of the new special representative should be put in place with that in mind.

Moreover, we need indicators for tracking what has or has not been done. In that regard, we are delighted that the new resolution sets a timeline for the development of global indicators. However, indicators need to be complemented with a mechanism for monitoring compliance and with the political will to make the cost of non-compliance much higher than it is today. Ultimately, the cost of excluding women from peacemaking and peacebuilding is peace itself.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria.

Mr. Sekudo (Nigeria): On behalf of the Nigerian delegation, I would like to commend the Vietnamese presidency of the Security Council for initiating this important meeting on the landmark resolution 1325 (2000), which was adopted unanimously by the Council nine years ago. Nigeria welcomes the depth of the analysis made by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2009/465) and the effort to translate resolution 1325 (2000) into practical reality for women and girls all over the world. We convey our appreciation to the Deputy Secretary General for her statement. We also commend the contributions of Ms. Rachel N. Mayanja, Ms. Inés Alberdi and

Ms. Asha Hagi Elmi Amin, and we thank them for their briefings.

As resolution 1325 (2000) affirms, the needs of women and girls transcend the traditional socio-economic, political and cultural considerations, but also include the need to guarantee their security and access and an enabling environment that ensures their meaningful participation in society. This meeting thus affords us the opportunity to assess the actions we have taken — of the lack of them — in fulfilment of our collective obligations under resolution 1325 (2000). Without a doubt, we need new strategies to accelerate the fulfilment of those obligations.

It is heartening that some Member States have demonstrated the effectiveness of mainstreaming gender as a viable strategy for the implementation of the resolution. This is borne out by the good example of the Indian Government in deploying an all-female peacekeeping unit in Liberia, an act that has not only encouraged Liberian women's participation in their country's security forces, but has also emboldened women to report cases of abuse. Another commendable example is the programme for the treatment and care of rape victims by the Forum for African Women Educationalists.

Commendable as those actions are, more needs to be done to develop national action plans for the implementation of the resolution by Member States. Indeed, the Secretary-General's report indicates that only 16 Member States have developed national action plans. This is an issue that requires our urgent attention.

The effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) will require an integrated approach. It will require us to change our mindsets so that women and girls are no longer depicted as mere victims of war. It will also require us to acknowledge and highlight the roles and positive contributions of women and girls to society. In addition, issues of gender justice, accountability and rehabilitation must form part of intervention programmes to assist women and girls.

With regard to the protection of women and girls from sexual violence, Nigeria reiterates its firm support for resolutions 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009) and for a zero-tolerance policy on sexual violence against women and girls. It is in this context that we commend the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur in the Sudan for providing police and military escorts for women and girls to enable them to undertake their tasks. In addition, we reiterate our support for conflict-prevention measures to reduce threats to women and girls.

We urge Member States to respond to the needs of women and girls guided by the tenets of human security. As the 2003 final report of the Commission on Human Security noted, human security means protecting vital freedoms. It means protecting people from critical and pervasive threats and situations, and building on their strengths and aspirations. It also means creating systems that give people the building blocks of survival, dignity and livelihood. Indeed, resolution 1325 (2000) created obligations that we unanimously accepted nine years ago. We must therefore join hands to fulfil these obligations. My Government stands ready to work with the Council and other Member States in the discharge of these commitments.

The President: I now call on the representative of Singapore.

Mr. Menon (Singapore): I should like to express my warmest congratulations to you, Mr. President, and to Viet Nam on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October and for having organized this important debate on women and peace and security. As a fellow member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, we wish you every success and are confident that you will do an excellent job as President of the Council for this month. Our warmest congratulations also go to the delegation of the United States for the exemplary manner in which it handled the presidency of the Security Council last month.

One of the most famous symbols of the global search for peace is the Nobel Peace Prize, which is awarded every year to the person who has done the most to promote peace in the world. What is less well known is the fact that Alfred Nobel, the Swedish inventor who created the prize, was actually inspired by a woman — the Baroness Bertha von Suttner, a peace activist who campaigned tirelessly against the wars in Europe in the late nineteenth century. Alfred Nobel had her in mind when he wrote in his will that the Peace Prize should be given to the most deserving person, a Swede or a foreigner, a man or a woman.

The adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) by the Council was an acknowledgement of the truth borne

out by most of human history that women play a powerful role in the promotion of peace and security. This is evident when women are allowed to participate fully, equally and effectively in all stages of the peace process — peacekeeping, peace negotiations and peacebuilding — and are similarly involved in the development and implementation of post-conflict strategies, reconstruction and consolidation. As my colleagues have already spoken with great eloquence on these issues, I simply wish to emphasize a few key points.

There remains a serious gap in the translation of commitments made on paper into reality. It is a sad fact that the impact of conflict is borne disproportionately by women. For instance, over 70 per cent of the casualties in recent conflicts have been non-combatants, most of them women and children. Moreover, conflicts have profound implications for women's basic health and survival. Of the countries that have the highest lifetime risks of maternal death today, most are at war or in a post-conflict situation. In addition, as a country begins to emerge from conflict, women and girls have specific priorities and needs in such areas as physical security, socio-economic conditions, education, income generation, access to basic services, as well as gender-responsive law enforcement and access to justice.

Unfortunately, these needs and priorities are often not recognized or met. Studies have shown that there is a substantial gap in financing for women's needs in post-conflict situations. This cripples the ability of women to contribute meaningfully to their societies and communities. Moreover, efforts to include women in peacebuilding and reconstruction processes are often limited. Women make up 52 per cent of the world population but comprise only 7 per cent of negotiators on official negotiating delegations. In addition, women often lack the organizational force to make their voices heard in political and economic decision-making. As a result, women are prevented from making the contributions that they would like to make to post-conflict governance and the consolidation of peace.

It is vital that the international community redouble its efforts to empower women, especially ahead of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) next year. We look forward to the report of the Secretary-General, as requested by the resolution that the Council has just adopted, which will provide important recommendations on how to address women's participation and their inclusion in peacebuilding and planning in the aftermath of conflict. Singapore was pleased to co-sponsor this resolution, as well as resolution 1888 (2009) last week, ably led by the Vietnamese and United States delegations, respectively. What these two texts show is that the United Nations must lead by example to address gender issues in United Nations mandates, including the greater participation of women in political, peacebuilding and peacekeeping missions.

The simple presence of women military, police and civilian peacekeepers on the ground has a tremendous positive effect on local communities by reaching out to and serving as powerful role models for local women. Women currently constitute just 2 per cent of military personnel and 8 per cent of police personnel in United Nations peacekeeping missions, and more should be done to encourage greater female participation. During the INTERPOL General Assembly to be held in Singapore later this week, Singapore will be working with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) to promote DPKO's "Women in Peacekeeping: the Power to Empower" global campaign to recruit more women police for peacekeeping operations. The continuing need for the increased participation of female officers in United Nations peacekeeping operations will also be highlighted in the outcome declaration of the INTERPOL-United Nations ministerial meeting.

I should like to end where I began, with the Nobel Peace Prize. When Alfred Nobel created the Nobel Peace Prize, he intended for Baroness von Suttner to become the first recipient. However, it took five more years before she was honoured in 1905 and became the first woman to receive the Peace Prize. At her presentation ceremony, Jørgen Løvland, then Chairman of the Nobel Committee, said:

> "History constantly demonstrates the great influence of women. Women have encouraged the ideas of war, the attitude to life, and the causes for which men have fought, for which their sons were brought up, and of which they have dreamed. Any change or reformation of these ideas must be brought about chiefly by women."

It is up to us to ensure that all women around the world have the opportunity to exercise their profound power to do so.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Portugal.

Mr. Moraes Cabral (Portugal): I should like to begin by joining others in thanking you, Mr. President, for holding this open debate on this very important matter. I should also like to congratulate you on the excellent concept paper you distributed before this meeting. I should also like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women for their fruitful and comprehensive interventions.

Portugal naturally concurs with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union, but I should like to make some additional remarks.

The adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) represented a landmark in the promotion and protection of human rights. It not only brought to the attention of this organ the pressing issues of gender equality and the empowerment of women, but it also made clear that women have a role to play in conflict situations, besides that of victims, as peacemakers and peacekeepers.

It is our belief that the equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes has a positive impact on the international security system, thus favouring the implementation of the objectives of the Security Council - maintaining peace and security. At the same time, it is of fundamental importance that we develop policies that envisage the promotion of the political, economic and social roles of women in post-conflict situations.

It is undeniable that situations of conflict have a great impact on women. They are too often victims of violence and of sexual violence used as a weapon of war. And at the same time, they very often become the main providers of economic security and survival to their families. There is thus the need to ensure that, in post-conflict situations, we also build on their experiences.

Portugal reaffirms its commitment to the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We adopted last August our national plan of action to contribute to the implementation of that document at the national, regional and international policy levels. The drafting of this national plan of action involved a one-year long participatory process, which encompassed wide-ranging governmental contributions together with broad and public consultations with universities, non-governmental organizations, media and other relevant civil society sectors and international networks.

Our national plan recognizes the specific impacts of contemporary wars on the lives of women and addresses the efforts to prevent, combat and mitigate these impacts. Our plan, which will extend to 2013, is built around the objectives of strengthening women's participation and representation in all efforts to promote peace and security; promoting gender mainstreaming in the sectors of security, such as peacekeeping missions and security system reform; justice and development aid; and reinforcing the protection of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict areas.

Allow me briefly to highlight five main objectives of our plan. It seeks, first, to increase women's participation and mainstream gender equality in all phases of peacebuilding processes and at all levels of decision-making; secondly, to promote capacity-building on gender equality and gender-based violence, as well as other aspects covered by resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), for all those involved in peacebuilding and development aid efforts; thirdly, to promote and protect women's human rights in conflict areas and post-conflict scenarios, taking into account the prevention and elimination of gender-based violence and the promotion of the empowerment of women; fourthly, to invest in and disseminate knowledge on issues concerning women, peace and security, including awareness-raising among decision-makers and the broader public; and lastly, to ensure the participation of civil society in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and the national plan of action.

Our national plan thus embodies Portugal's concern over the vulnerability of women and girls in post-conflict situations, together with our national commitment to developing measures to answer the needs of women in these situations. In concrete terms, this is translated at the international level into the promotion of policies, strategies and legislation to prevent armed violence, including domestic armed violence, as well as in the systematic integration into development programmes of a gender dimension and training for development actors in this field.

Furthermore, our national action plan emphasizes that women and girls are relevant and capable actors of change and development, and is based on the conviction that, first, it is critical that we overcome the traditional perspective of women and girls as being exclusively vulnerable victims in need of protection, and that, secondly, it is thus essential to implement measures that guarantee that this perspective will be taken into consideration at all levels of peacebuilding processes by the international and local actors involved.

Finally, I wish to say that the Portuguese Government interprets this resolution as extending beyond armed conflicts and humanitarian aid to include the promotion of policy coherence at the national level concerning issues such as disarmament and weapons control, public security and the elimination of gender-based violence.

Nearly 10 years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), there has obviously been enormous progress, but we must recognize that its aims have not yet been fulfilled. I encourage the Council and its members to carry on the good work in that direction.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Iceland.

Mr. Jónasson (Iceland): Let me at the outset thank you, Sir, for convening this open debate on women and peace and security to discuss the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The focus you have chosen for our discussion, "Responding to the needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations for sustainable peace and security", is highly relevant and provides ample scope for reflecting on what the focus of our work should be in light of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the resolution next year.

Iceland maintains a strong commitment to resolution 1325 (2000), being one of the few countries that have adopted a national action plan pursuant to the resolution. The Icelandic Government has decided to focus its work related to resolution 1325 (2000) on post-conflict reconstruction and women's access to peace negotiations, being convinced that the inclusion of women in peace processes is a security issue essential to sustainable peace.

In particular, Iceland has supported the extraordinary work of the International Women's Commission for a Just and Sustainable Palestinian-Israeli Peace. This is an organization where women from opposite sides of the conflict, together with a group of women from the international community, have managed to find viable ways to promote peace and peaceful alternatives to conflict.

Last summer, Iceland organized an international conference on resolution 1325 (2000), entitled "Women Negotiating Peace", which highlighted how best to ensure that women are included in formal and informal peace processes. Allow me to contribute to this discussion by recapitulating some of the main issues addressed at the Reykjavik conference. Four themes were predominant.

First, the conference emphasized the importance of raising awareness of resolution 1325 (2000) and recognized the importance of using the forthcoming tenth anniversary of the adoption of the resolution for that purpose. Awareness should be promoted in the international community, within the United Nations system, as well as within Member States and societies in or emerging from conflicts.

Secondly, there is need for increased high-level commitment to the resolution, both within the United Nations system and by the Member States. Here, the maw concern was the issue of gender architecture within the United Nations system, which now has been alleviated in part through the unanimous adoption of General Assembly resolution 63/311, calling among other things for a new and consolidated United Nations gender entity to be headed by an under-secretary-general. The Security Council could establish a working group on resolution 1325 (2000) and set an example by incorporating the gender perspective when discussing conflict.

Thirdly, there was a strong call to the United Nations system and Member States to use the tenth anniversary as an impetus to get serious about implementation. The Secretary-General should insist on accountability for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by the United Nations system. To increase the focus on results, the High-level Steering Group chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General, should focus on the implementation of 1325 (2000). More women should be appointed as special representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General, and gender advisers should be accorded a higher status to ensure that gender mainstreaming does not become sidetracked. On the membership's side, the lead must be taken in

implementing the resolution, prioritizing the adoption and implementation of national action plans.

Finally, but perhaps most importantly, the conference identified a clear need for accountability and reporting mechanisms to ensure successful implementation. Therefore, the Security Council is urged to consider the setting up of a mechanism for holding Member States accountable for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The mechanism should be based on clear performance targets and timelines and have the necessary political backup to report on achievements and failures of implementation by Member States. Resolution 1612 (2005) regarding the use of child soldiers might provide a convenient model for how reporting and accountability can be ensured.

One of the workshops at the conference in Reykjavik approved recommendations on how to mark the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) next year. Time does not allow me to mention them here. The nine recommendations will be circulated with the printed version of my text. The anniversary provides us with an opportunity to draw attention to the resolution, promote greater commitment and improved implementation and work towards the strengthening of the resolution. Let us seize that opportunity.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, on Viet Nam's assumption of the Security Council presidency.

Australia was an original sponsor of resolution 1325 (2000), and we value the opportunity today to address the Council on the issue of responding to the needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations for sustainable peace and security. Women can be, of course, as we know and as we have heard, powerful agents of change for peace and security. The historical comments on the Baroness von Suttner and her influence in inspiring the Nobel Peace Prize, which we have just had recalled for us by our colleague from Singapore, have eloquently reminded us of that fact. Early recognition of and response to the special needs of women and girls post-conflict, obviously, as we know, helps to lay a solid foundation for sustainable peace. Australia is itself very alert to that reality.

We welcome the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/465). We also welcome the deployment by UNDP of senior gender advisers, including to Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste and Nepal. We were particularly encouraged by the report's focus on the vital issue of access to social services such as education and health, including maternal and reproductive health.

We endorse all of the Secretary-General's recommendations and would like to address just a few of them today. First of all, we would value the convening in 2010 of a high-level event to commemorate the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). This would provide a very useful opportunity to take stock of our implementation and assess, at the highest levels — and this does need to be done at the highest levels — what remains to be done to capitalize on recent momentum towards enhanced implementation. We congratulate those 16 countries that have formulated national action plans. Australia itself needs to do better on this. We need to accelerate our own efforts, and we would bring to a high-level event concrete advice on further, practical measures beyond those we have already undertaken to further implement resolution 1325 (2000).

Secondly, we agree that impunity for gender-based crimes must not be tolerated. We congratulate the Council for its adoption last week of resolution 1888 (2009). As our Finnish colleague has just said, this was a major step forward, and we must now do absolutely whatever we need to ensure its implementation. I should say that my own country is deeply concerned with the reported high prevalence of rape and other forms of grave sexual violence in Myanmar. The absence of effective judicial and security institutions to ensure accountability, prevent violence and combat impunity remains a pressing challenge in many post-conflict societies. Formal justice systems must provide accessible recourse for women.

Thirdly, women's equal and full participation in all efforts toward the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, as well as reconciliation, is critical. We agree that increasing women's role in decision-making bodies is an obvious key. In post-conflict situations, women need to be represented, of course, early, integrally and at all stages during peace negotiations, and this will bolster the priority given to women's recovery needs and should build a more solid

peace. Improved electoral participation is also essential, and we note with appreciation, in particular, the report's focus on the efforts of Timor-Leste and its partners to enhance the quality and quantity of women's representation and participation in village council elections, which were held earlier this year. This sets a helpful precedent in promoting gender-responsive reconstruction and local development agendas.

Fourthly, we agree with the Secretary-General that an accurate, more coherent system of data collection is necessary to monitor progress, address gaps in implementation and better facilitate the sharing of best practices. When developing such tools, consideration should be given to collecting and analysing information on areas including female heads of households, women's land use patterns, access to credit, membership in agricultural cooperatives, participation in formal employment, reproductive health and educational status.

Finally, we welcome the General Assembly's recent progress towards establishing a composite United Nations gender entity, and we very much look forward to further strengthening of United Nations coordination on gender issues, including on women and peace and security matters.

Women's capacity for peacebuilding must be strengthened, particularly where women are themselves mobilizing to end conflict and foster peace and reconciliation in their own communities.

Australia is partnering throughout the Pacific and Asia to build local and regional capacities. We were pleased to be involved in the International Women for Peace Conference held in Timor-Leste in March and to support the travelling road show exhibition of that Conference, which strengthened, locally, women's roles in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. In the Pacific, we are also pleased to support the regional women's community media network on women and peace and security, which raises awareness of and supports the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) through media initiatives in Fiji, Tonga, Solomon Islands and Bougainville, Papua New Guinea.

The role of civil society organizations is, of course, also essential. We are encouraged by the sustained and concerted efforts of many individuals and organizations worldwide that campaign in this field. Australia was particularly pleased to support the "Peace Talks" initiative of the International Women's Development Agency, which raised awareness on implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in the Pacific through training for civil society organizations from Solomon Islands, Tonga, Fiji and Bougainville.

To conclude, while we recognize that there have been improvements in our united efforts to respond to the needs of women and promote the role and voice of women in post-conflict societies, very clearly, we all must recognize that further very determined efforts are required. As we approach the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), Australia certainly recommits to this compelling objective, an objective, as I said, that we must all ensure is achieved.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Let me, at the outset, congratulate you, Mr. President, on your convening of this open debate on women and peace and security. We express our appreciation for the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/465) and to Ms. Rachel Mayanja, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and Ms. Inés Alberdi, the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, for their important presentations today.

This meeting is being held almost ten years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, to evaluate what has been achieved so far regarding the concrete and legal protection of women in armed conflicts. This requires of us an affirmation that, despite the light shed in the resolution on the suffering of women in armed conflict and the resolution's role in strengthening international cooperation, there are still many challenges that we need to overcome to realize the full implementation of its provisions.

In particular, there is a lack of requisite information, data and legislation, which are either missing or not made use of during armed conflicts. This sometimes leads to impunity for the perpetrators of crimes against women. Practical, legislative and judicial efforts must be strengthened to enhance women's opportunities to exercise their right to live in peace and security, within a comprehensive range of policies that achieve equality in rights and duties among all communities and subsequently lead to

achieving full social and economic development in all spheres.

Here we have to underline the complementarity between the pillars of development, peace and security outlined in the Millennium Declaration. Providing security for women means strengthening United Nations capacities in the field of dispute settlement. This is not confined to dispute management but also requires focusing on the enhancement of the socio-economic development of women in a way that will foster their ability to deal with security challenges.

That is why the adoption of resolution 1888 (2009), which calls for the appointment of a special representative of the Secretary-General on sexual violence against women in armed conflict, was a step in the right direction. We had hoped, however, that his or her mandate would have included all forms of violence perpetrated against women in situations of armed conflict, and not be limited only to sexual violence while excluding other grave violations such as killing, maiming and torture.

However, there is no doubt that expanding the mandate of peacekeeping operations to include the protection of women from sexual violence has contributed to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Empowering women and increasing their participation in decision-making processes, including in designing and implementing strategies, would contribute effectively to the full implementation of the resolution. The same applies to the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission and United Nations agencies, programmes and funds, which should include the effective participation of the international community, civil society and relevant non-governmental organizations to enhance the role of Governments and communities in protecting women and providing them with better services to help them overcome challenges.

In turn, that requires coordination between the new special representative of the Secretary-General on sexual violence against women in armed conflict and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. There is a great need to achieve synergy and coordination between those two high-level United Nations officials, in particular because they are concerned with the safety of two important members of the family, namely, women and children. It should be borne in mind, however, that the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict is broader and more inclusive, as it is not limited to addressing sexual violence.

In that regard, it is of crucial importance that we underline the role of education, culture and empowerment in improving the status of women in peace as well as armed conflict situations. All schools must be protected from deliberate bombardment — not only in places mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General, such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Afghanistan and Pakistan, but also in the occupied Palestinian territories, where Israel bombed schools in Gaza. Such actions must be condemned and investigated as inhuman assaults against peace and security.

In line with its historical role, Egypt has been eager to assume its responsibilities in strengthening regional cooperation among States in the Arab region and countries of the African continent. The First Lady of Egypt is leading that campaign through the Suzanne Mubarak Women's International Peace Movement, which promotes international and regional awareness of the gravity of the issue. Its work includes the convening of numerous meetings and regional seminars, in cooperation with United Nations programmes and funds, to enhance the capabilities of States in designing and implementing national action plans. Those plans should include the active participation of women's peace organizations focusing on youth and the culture of peace. The goal is to effectively implement resolution 1325 (2000) while paying particular attention to issues related to the protection of women and children in conflict situations by, among other things, promoting international efforts to combat the phenomenon of human trafficking and strengthening the effective participation of women in peacebuilding, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction in a way that protects their right to live in peace and provides them with the necessary security to help them assume their role in developing their societies while guaranteeing a better future for new generations.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Sri Lanka.

Mr. Kohona (Sri Lanka): My delegation appreciates the convening of this debate, which provides an opportunity for us to focus our attention on

the protection of the rights of women and girls, in particular in situations of armed conflict and their aftermath. I would also like to take this opportunity, Sir, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency.

Resolution 1325 (2000) has promoted greater awareness across the United Nations system and the international community about those most vulnerable to sexual and physical harm as well as social, economic and political disempowerment in conflict and post-conflict situations. The international community must work together to effectively put an end to those most vicious and inhumane forms of gender-based exploitation. We welcome the Secretary-General's recommendations.

The empowerment of women is one of the most effective mechanisms for their protection. My country, Sri Lanka, ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 28 years ago, and has taken proactive steps to fully implement its provisions through national legislation. Our Constitution itself protects women's rights. We have also adopted a women's charter that embodies the principles of the Convention and provides for women's participation in peacebuilding through community-based programmes. Sri Lanka has also established a Ministry of Women's Affairs, which spearheads national programmes for the advancement of women and the protection of their rights. Our penal code lists rape as a serious offence punishable with rigorous imprisonment, not exceeding 20 years, and provides for the offender to pay compensation to the victim, consistent with the determination of a court of law.

We also note with appreciation the report (S/2009/465) of the Secretary-General to the Council in pursuance of resolution 1820 (2008). We note with concern the continued use of sexual violence against civilians, widely and systematically, in particular against women and girls in armed conflicts and their aftermath.

Sri Lanka was embroiled in an armed conflict against a brutal terrorist group for 27 years. That conflict ended in May of this year with the defeat of that terrorist group. Throughout their campaign to defeat those terrorists, our security forces maintained the highest discipline. We can proudly report that we are not among the countries that the Secretary-General's report lists where grave sexual offences are reported to have been committed by security forces against civilians caught in armed conflict and its aftermath. In fact, no allegations of rape were made against our security forces as they successfully advanced against those terrorists.

It is also noteworthy that none of the mandate holders of the United Nations has found any evidence of such offences having been committed by our armed forces during that campaign. One of the factors that may have contributed to that record is the training provided with the assistance of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the prompt action taken whenever allegations were made.

I would like to cite for the benefit of the Council the case of Krishanti Kumaraswamy, a 16-year-old schoolgirl who was raped and murdered by 6 soldiers on 7 August 1996, 13 years ago. Our Government launched an investigation into the case. The six soldiers involved were arrested, prosecuted and given the maximum sentence of life imprisonment. I cite that incident to illustrate the fact that strong and definitive action against those responsible for committing acts of sexual violence serves as a deterrent. In that context, it is deeply regretted that reference has been made to Sri Lanka, including it among countries where rape is alleged to have been used as a tactic of war. In fact, not even the terrorist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, despite their tendency to exaggerate incidents for propaganda purposes, made such an allegation against the security forces of Sri Lanka as they advanced to eliminate them.

We welcome the Secretary-General's recommendation that equal attention be given to sexual violence in all situations of concern where it is perpetrated against civilians, and that the United Nations remain engaged to take on a greater global advocacy role on the issue of sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. We also strongly support the recommendation of the Secretary-General's that increased participation of women in post-conflict governance and reconstruction should be ensured.

My delegation also welcomes the high-level ministerial meeting planned for next year to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000).

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Belgium.

Mr. Grauls (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Belgium fully aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union, and thanks the Secretary-General for his report (S/2009/465) on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Belgium also wishes to thank your delegation, Mr. President, for having taken the initiative to organize this very important debate.

With regard to the fight against sexual violence, this past year will be a landmark in the annals of the United Nations. In just over one year, the Security Council has adopted resolution 1820 (2008), expanded the follow-up mechanisms of resolution of 1612 (2005) and recently, with the adoption of resolution 1888 (2009), provided the United Nations with practical tools to tackle sexual violence in the field.

Belgium, which had the privilege of participating in the drafting and adoption of resolution 1820 (2008) while it held a seat on the Security Council, welcomes the cohesion and vision the Council has demonstrated in this field throughout this period. We hope for the swift appointment of the new special representative of the Secretary-General on sexual violence and establishment of the team of experts called for in resolution 1888 (2009). We are ready to assist these two mechanisms in carrying out their missions.

The fight against sexual violence is one thing; the broader question of the role of women and their place in peace negotiations, peacebuilding and reconstruction processes is quite another. Resolution 1325 (2000) is and must remain, in our view, the key instrument guiding our actions in this area. However, as far as the implementation of this resolution goes — excuse me for speaking frankly, Mr. President — the international community really has nothing to be proud of. We must keep our eyes on the bigger picture.

Of course, some progress has been made. Fifteen years after the Beijing Conference, notably thanks to the industry of the Commission on the Status of Women, we can affirm that questions relating to gender have found their place in official United Nations discourse. We also recognize the efforts that have been made by the Secretary-General to ensure greater representation of women at a high level in the United Nations administration, even though there remains a long way to go.

If we make the effort to look beyond our New York bubble and cast an eye towards the situation on the ground, we are forced to recognize that the situation of women living in countries in conflict or emerging from it has not really improved since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) nine years ago. For Belgium, this status quo is unacceptable. It is specifically the lives of such women that we committed to improving when we adopted resolution 1325 (2000).

As far as Belgium is concerned, the situation is very simple. A year from now, we will celebrate the passage of 10 years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). We therefore have one year left to fill the gap that exists between the programmes envisioned in New York or our capitals on the one hand, and, on the other, their financing and implementation on the ground. Without significant efforts in that direction, it will be a sad anniversary indeed that we celebrate next year.

What can we do in one year? Probably a great deal more than we imagine. First, several essential measures can be taken easily, almost overnight, and at very little cost to the United Nations. Such measures might include, for example, increasing the number of women in United Nations mediation teams and in particular the appointment of a female chief negotiator. Similarly, a gender adviser should be appointed in the Department of Political Affairs.

Secondly, and in order to ensure that the specific needs of women are truly taken into account and earnestly responded to in peacebuilding and reconstruction processes, we must put our money where our mouth is when it comes to gender budgeting. We must allocate sufficient resources to women's programmes. This is an effort which it behoves each and every one of us to undertake with urgency, not only here but also at the national level.

Thirdly, we must support and encourage the growing presence of women among the Blue Helmets and police officers in peacekeeping operations. We can all strive in this regard to develop women's units and enhanced expertise on gender issues within our own armed forces and police forces.

Fourthly, Belgium cannot emphasize strongly enough the importance and usefulness of developing national action plans for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Belgium is proud to announce that it developed such a plan of action last year and is

ready to share its experience with any Member State that may be interested.

In conclusion, with regard to developing such national action plans, Belgium wonders whether the Peacebuilding Commission could play a more significant role in the countries in which it is active. In the Central African Republic, the Commission, chaired by Belgium, has already striven as far as possible to ensure the implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008). It would take but a small additional effort to develop a national action plan in partnership with the national authorities, and Belgium is prepared to help.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Denmark.

Mr. Hoeeg (Denmark): I should like first of all to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency. I should also like to associate my delegation with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union.

I should like specifically to thank the presidency for having convened this meeting and thereby once again directing the attention of the Security Council to the indispensable and vital role of women in all efforts to build and maintain peace and security.

The increased awareness of gender across the United Nations system is indeed encouraging. In this respect, Denmark welcomes the recent decision of the General Assembly to establish a United Nations gender entity. We hope that the entity will bring about the much needed improvements to the work of the United Nations, including in the area of international peace and security. We look forward to receiving a proposal on the details of the entity, as well as the early appointment of the new under-secretary-general. We must not lose momentum on this topic.

The report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2009/465) presents an overview of achievements, gaps and challenges, as well as recommendations for further actions to accelerate the implementation of Resolution 1325 (2000). The report introduces its conclusions thus:

> "The significance of resolution 1325 (2000) lies in the way it links the impact of war and conflict on women on the one hand, and promotes their participation in various peace and security processes such as in peace negotiations, constitutional and electoral reforms and reconstruction and reintegration on the other" (*S/2009/465, para. 77*).

That link between the impact of war on women and the possibility of using the potential of women in peace negotiations and reconstruction is precisely what we must focus on in our implementation of the resolution.

Resolution 1325 (2000) is the very backbone of Security Council resolutions on women and peace and security, highlighting the necessity of addressing the issue of women as peacebuilders as well as victims of war. Women's empowerment and respect for women's rights are among the prerequisites for sustainable peace and stable, democratic development.

Let me highlight three key areas for future work in this field. First, we must work to achieve greater active participation of women in peacebuilding and reconstruction. Secondly, we must enhance recognition of the special needs and rights of women and girls before, during and after armed conflict. Thirdly, we must provide for the protection of girls and women against violence, including gender-based violence such as rape and sexual abuse, and we must end impunity for gender-related crimes. Allow me in this respect to take this opportunity to welcome the Council's adoption last week of resolution 1888 (2009), which Denmark co-sponsored.

These three objectives are also those that Denmark is prioritizing in its new national action plan for implementing resolution 1325 (2000). In order to be able to monitor progress, we have developed indicators for each objective. Last year, Denmark revised its national action plan. The new plan for 2008-2013 is based on experience from our first plan. Among the lessons learned is that we need to ensure the full cooperation of all stakeholders in the peacekeeping and security processes, in all phases and at all levels. In the new Danish plan, a stronger emphasis is placed on using the untapped potential of women and on involving them actively and on an equal basis in peacebuilding processes and decision-making at all levels and with a focus on visibility at the country level.

The Danish national action plan was formulated in a participatory manner involving all relevant national stakeholders. An annual dialogue with civil society is planned and an inter-ministerial working

group is responsible for reporting on the plan's implementation. I have elaborated in some detail on the Danish national action plan and its objectives, since resolution 1325 (2000) in itself will not do the trick. It must be implemented. Action plans must be formulated and actions undertaken and monitored. We fully share the Secretary-General's concern over the resolution's slow implementation, as implementation is obviously the key to any resolution's being worth the effort put into finding the right words.

Resolution 1325 (2009) is a strong resolution, and we all have an obligation to implement it effectively. We see the adoption of today's resolution 1889 (2009) as a step towards strengthening our joint efforts in that respect. Some progress has been made and should be recognized. Incorporation of gender perspectives into peace processes is emerging, but slowly. United Nations agencies and an increasing number of Governments have developed action plans. International cooperation is also increasing. That is positive, but not enough.

Denmark fully agrees with the recommendations of the Secretary-General on ensuring accountability. We also emphasize the stated need for concerted efforts to collect data. At the end of the day, it is results that count. It is the responsibility of the United Nations system, as well as of national Governments, to increase the visibility of the results of initiatives undertaken to ensure that the resolution has a genuine impact on the role and status of girls and women in conflict.

We hope that we will soon come much closer to full and equal participation of women in peace processes, at all levels of negotiation and decision-making, and that we can not only effectively protect the rights of women but also dramatically reduce and eventually eliminate sexual violence. We have cases that show that progress is possible. Rwanda is an excellent example of how a country can emerge successfully from conflict when women enjoy equal rights and decision-making power. Resolution 1325 (2000), if and when it is effectively implemented in other conflict situations, can provide similar, positive results.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Afghanistan.

Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan): First, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on assuming the presidency of the Council for the month of October, and to thank you for convening this meeting so early in your presidency. There has recently been noteworthy positive momentum in this Chamber concerning the rights of women, and it is my hope that we can benefit from that momentum here today.

Worldwide, women start at a disadvantage. In some countries, this means wage discrepancies and debates over harassment in the workplace. But in conflict and post-conflict situations, the substantial ills facing societies concerned are magnified with regard to women. When a society is poor, proportionally more women go hungry. When education or health care is lacking, women and girls are the first to be deprived. And when a nation faces substantial insecurity, women find themselves more vulnerable, more restricted and more cut off from necessary resources.

The situation of women in Afghanistan became an issue of wider international interest when the Taliban first began enforcing its brutal, misogynistic social policies and Afghan women became hunted people in their own homeland. Thus, when the Taliban was toppled in 2001, it was seen at least partially as the stroke that freed Afghan women from their chains. Afghanistan and the international community made a promise to each other that what happened under the Taliban would never happen again. More importantly, we made the same promise to the women of Afghanistan.

Over the past eight years, we have kept those promises to the best of our ability. The Afghan Constitution guarantees equal rights to women and representation in the Government. Afghanistan has endorsed the Millennium Development Goals, is a signatory to the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, fully supports the implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), and has put in place a legal and political framework that protects and promotes the rights of women. Beyond these legal initiatives, Afghan women have seen tangible improvements in their daily lives, including improved access to education, health care and basic infrastructure. Afghanistan's national action plan for women ensures that women and girls receive equal access to these resources.

Further, and perhaps most importantly, Afghan women now play an active role in the socio-political life of Afghanistan. Women have been appointed to

high governmental posts and comprise a guaranteed percentage of representation in local and national governing bodies alike. In the most recent election, women ran for positions in provincial councils in greater numbers than ever before, and there were even two female candidates for President. More than 60,000 women were trained and volunteered as observers, poll workers and ballot counters. And, despite the increasingly turbulent security situation, more than 2 million women across the country came out to vote.

Despite these positive developments, Afghan women do not enjoy the freedom and security they deserve. In order to fully satisfy our promise to the women of Afghanistan, we need to understand the roots of the problems as well as the situations today that frustrate our efforts.

First, enduring insecurity has always played a central role in women's suffering in Afghanistan. In the past, insecurity caused a complete breakdown in infrastructure and resources, resulting in backbreaking poverty and lack of access to health care and basic education. Today, restricted access to the most insecure parts of the country perpetuates this situation and hinders progress. The Taliban is increasingly targeting civilians, particularly women and girls, to deny them access to basic services and rights. In addition, insecurity promotes a gun culture that values brute force over the rule of law. The resulting danger keeps women confined to their homes out of fear for their safety and honour, further restricting their access to services and public life.

Secondly, extremist ideologies of oppression have primarily threatened women over the past 30 years. Throughout the 1990s, the Taliban and other armed groups engaged in severe violence against women. Crimes against women, including sexual violence and forced marriage, were justified and protected by extremists. Unfortunately, as long as insecurity and extremism persist, Afghanistan cannot be freed from this perversion of perspective and action regarding women.

In addition to those root causes, weak and fragile State institutions in parts of Afghanistan have, regrettably, restricted the Government's ability to fully protect the rights of women. An infant justice system and police force do not yet have the training or the resources to adequately investigate, prosecute and punish crimes. And our underdeveloped bureaucracy has not yet acquired the capacities necessary to meet the demands placed upon it. In Afghanistan, there is not a lack of will for progress, but circumstances have proved to be a formidable opponent to its achievement.

Despite these continuing challenges, Afghanistan is committed to ensuring that all women fully enjoy their rights in safety. With the help and support of the international community, we are addressing weak and insufficient governance through capacity-building and the strengthening of our institutions and our security apparatus. In that regard, we emphasize the importance of the new focus of the international forces on protecting the population, which will help to minimize violence against women. Further, we are continually trying to improve the legal status of Afghan women and to uphold international juridical and legislative standards, for example through the review of more than 60 of the more controversial articles of the proposed Shia family relations law.

The Government of Afghanistan is committed to representing the interests of all Afghans, male and female, young and old. We are encouraging Afghan women to take a proactive and vocal role in their future, as that is essential to re-weaving the economic, social and political fabric of Afghanistan. Above all, in our political pursuit of national reconciliation, we must not break the promise that we made to ourselves and to Afghan women in 2001. We cannot betray women's rights and security in exchange for a shallow peace in Afghanistan, because, in doing so, we would betray our own hope for a stable future. Instead, we must unite around the ideal of equal justice and rights for all.

The President: I now call on the representative of Papua New Guinea.

Mr. Aisi (Papua New Guinea): Sir, I wish you and your delegation well during your presidency of the Council for this month. We also commend the delegation of the United States of America for its leadership during the month of September. I should also like to make two acknowledgements. We align ourselves with the statement to be delivered later on behalf of the Pacific small island developing States. I also acknowledge my colleague from Australia for having mentioned my country in his statement and for all the assistance that his country is giving us.

Mr. President, as we approach the tenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) next year, we commend your

delegation for this timely debate and, specifically, for focusing our collective attention on the theme "Responding to the needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations for sustainable peace and security", under the umbrella of the larger topic of women and peace and security. Your delegation rightly notes in the concept paper for this meeting (S/2009/490, annex) that significant gains have been achieved in the implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), "particularly in enhancing the protection of civilians in armed conflict, including women and girls, and promoting the participation of women in peace and security processes" (*para. 2*).

While we note the foregoing, we also agree with the important observation that your delegation makes, that the situation is far from satisfactory, with gaps and challenges remaining, particularly in the post-conflict period, when women's potential contribution to peacebuilding is constrained owing to their exclusion from the decision-making process and to inadequate recognition of and financing for their needs.

There is no doubt that the international community has fully accepted the fact that the participation of women in conflict resolution and in the post-conflict and peacebuilding process is an integral — if not critical — part of the way forward in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. We will continue to support the mainstreaming of the participation of women in the process.

We also make the observation that, even in the pre-conflict stage — especially when the international community becomes aware that a conflict is brewing — the voices of women should be sought to determine the nature and degree of the impending conflict situation. As we alluded to in our statement in the debate on the responsibility to protect held this year in the General Assembly, too often, the voices of women are not heard in the first instance, with this neglect having a detrimental effect on many societies which eventually fall into conflict.

Papua New Guinea's own relevant but unfortunate experience is borne out by the 10-year conflict on the island of Bougainville, providing us with an opportunity to reflect on the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000). In April 1998, the Security Council mandated a United Nations observer mission to assist in and oversee the resolution of the conflict and the peacebuilding process. The mission was successfully completed in 2005.

As we approach next year's fifth anniversary of the withdrawal of the observer mission, we are mindful of the observation made by Secretary-General in his 2009 report on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict (S/2009/304), in which he noted that threats to peace are often most imminent in the earliest post-conflict stage. This period offers a crucial window of opportunity to ensure the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

While the restoration of peace continues on Bougainville, we would respectfully submit that the fragility alluded to by the Secretary-General cannot be underestimated. As we continue to consolidate the peacebuilding phase through the efforts of the Government of Papua New Guinea, the autonomous government of Bougainville, the United Nations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other development partners, high demand will continue to be placed on all parties to ensure that the hard-won peace is never lost.

We commend the current United Nations project entitled UN Project Bougainville, which aims to provide

> "support ... to continue to find ways to address the long-term psychological impact that the recent conflict has had on people through loss of education, disruption to social services, livelihood and income; successful completion of the weapons disposal plan; implementation of a number of peacebuilding initiatives and restoring social services".

However, in the context of today's debate, I wish to make the observation that perhaps there is a need for more specific references to the provisions and the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). There should be more clarity as to where and in which specific areas women and girls should contribute in this project.

On a regional basis, and in the wider application of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter — especially in relation to the provisions of Article 52 — the Pacific has made and continues to make every effort to implement the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000). Recently, the leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum, at their fortieth Forum, adopted a

comprehensively packaged provision to address sexual and gender-based violence, noting in paragraph 63 of their communiqué that that phenomenon is

> "now widely recognized as a risk to human security and a potential destabilizing factor for communities and societies alike. It remains pervasive across the Pacific, and as it is still considered a sensitive issue in most Pacific cultures, its prevalence often goes underreported. There is an urgent need to acknowledge the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence in the Pacific at all levels of the community, whether occurring in the domestic context or during conflict and post-conflict situations".

I would also mention that it is commendable that in our region, many NGOs and civil society groups play effective facilitation roles in enhancing the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) and, we would argue, should be continuously engaged in that role.

All too often, women and children, including girls, have been at the forefront of too many conflicts. As innocent bystanders, they have been traumatized, injured or killed and are often passed off as "collateral damage". The United Nations and its agencies — the United Nations Development Programme, UNICEF and, especially, the United Nations Development Fund for Women — continue to do good work in the area of conflict. While much has been achieved, much more, obviously, needs to be done.

Lastly, there is a need, we argue, to tie into this debate the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and their achievement. Specifically, we note the need to leverage the great opportunity offered by MDG 8: that of partnerships. It is good, strong and strategic partnerships that will help to strengthen the implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009).

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina.

Mr. Argüello (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin by congratulating the Mission of Viet Nam on its assumption of the presidency and on organizing this open debate, which reflects the resolute commitment of the Security Council to the effective follow-up and implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) almost 10 years since its adoption. We thank the Secretary-General for submitting his report (S/2009/465). We endorse the recommendations contained therein, in particular regarding the establishment of monitoring and accountability mechanisms for the implementation of the resolution at the national, regional and international levels.

Argentina is among those countries that have made progress in developing an implementation plan for resolution 1325 (2000) in the defence sector. At the same time, it is drafting a national plan that addresses all the areas included in that instrument, and has incorporated specific policies for the implementation of resolution 1820 (2008) on sexual violence against women in situations of armed conflict.

The participation of women in post-conflict peacebuilding processes can be analysed from the standpoint both of the United Nations system and of the State. In the first case, it is essential to address the issue of gender from the planning stage of activities in the field and to sustain it in all phases of reconstruction and peacebuilding. To that end, it is necessary to improve the information systems of the various United Nations agencies and programmes so as to have a full understanding of the situation of women in a given place. At the same time, the cooperation of Member States is required in order to increase the participation of women in the field as civilian, military or police personnel.

From the viewpoint of the State, it is important that the role of women in post-conflict reconstruction activities be incorporated into national implementation plans for resolution 1325 (2000). That involves not only the deployment of a larger number of women in the field, but also acknowledgement of the effective role that women can perform in all stages of that process, including as mediators in peace processes.

The empowerment of women is fundamental to increasing their participation in reconstruction. The new institutions should take into account the interests and needs of women, and ensure their access to all entities that guarantee the enjoyment of their rights. However, at the same time, it is necessary to invest in the education and training of women so that they can play a role in the institutions thus established. That is particularly important in the case of political parties, electoral processes, judicial systems and security institutions.

In that regard, it is crucial to work within the State to put an end to gender violence. There is no potential for empowerment in a climate of violence. We therefore welcome the adoption of resolution 1888 (2009) with the broad support of United Nations Members, and believe that its implementation will be an effective step towards the eradication of impunity. The role of troop-contributing countries in that task is very important; in conjunction with the various United Nations programmes and agencies, those countries are in a position to advance joint initiatives to improve the lives of the women in missions in which they participate. Thus, for example, together with the United Nations Development Fund for Women, Argentina is currently organizing a workshop on gender and human rights aimed at raising the gender awareness of the Haitian authorities and people.

We believe that the systematic incorporation of gender issues in post-conflict recovery projects cannot be undertaken at the technical level or through theoretical commitments, but that it depends to a large degree on political will and adequate financing. Thus, it is up to us to make that a reality.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Natalegawa (Indonesia): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on Viet Nam's assumption of the presidency of the Council for the present month and to express my appreciation to you for convening this open debate. I also wish to extend our congratulations to the United States delegation on the successful deliberations during its presidency last month.

I would like to extend my appreciation to the Secretary-General for providing us with a progress report (S/2009/465) on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and for the recommendations contained therein. Ahead of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) in October 2010, we have an opportunity today in this open debate to advance women's participation in conflict prevention and resolution and in peacebuilding.

Armed conflict is devastating to any human being. However, it has disproportionate effects on women and girls. Their voices are silenced in conflict and their basic rights lost in the political and social deterioration that accompanies conflict. They become disempowered. A few days ago, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1888 (2009). That was another commendable endeavour to further strengthen the efforts of the international community to combat sexual violence in armed conflicts.

There is still, however, much action that can be taken by the international community to address the challenges faced by women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations. We should continue to promote at all levels awareness of the Geneva Convention of 1949 on the protection of civilians. The international community should continue to devise strategies to ease the bleak and harsh reality faced every day, particularly by women and girls living in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Nonetheless, our strategies ultimately must not merely treat women and girls as victims; they should also be a central part of peace agreements. Women are key partners in the post-conflict transformation process. Women should be enabled and empowered to play an active role in the many spheres of post-conflict life beyond earning livelihoods by also participating in political and peacebuilding processes. That should be promoted in a systematic way.

The role of women in post-conflict situations is paramount. Women serve as one of the main building blocks and instruments of peace. Yet, due to continuing violence during conflict, women face physical, mental and social barriers in post-conflict situations that undermine their role in peace. The international community must recognize and address that challenge effectively. Towards that end, international support should meet the multidimensional needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations. That objective needs to be met with adequate funding.

During our deliberations on this issue last year, Indonesia recognized the need to facilitate the full and effective participation of women in all stages of peace processes and peacebuilding. Indonesia supports more women playing key roles in peacekeeping missions, including as military and police personnel. For its part, Indonesia has sent female personnel as military observers, staff officers and members of our contingents in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We should also ensure that peacekeepers have adequate capacity to carry out provisions related to gender issues. Moreover, it is important that provisions on sexual violence within the mandates of peacekeeping missions be in line with other provisions, such as protection of civilians; they should be developed with a clear and comprehensive concept. Mandatory training for all peacekeeping personnel on addressing sexual violence should be continued and supported.

The international community must help to restore peace in conflict areas with the participation of women. We commend the continued effort to incorporate a gender perspective in all policies and programmes of the United Nations system, facilitated by a strong gender entity within the United Nations. However, we note that gender-targeted projects in post-conflict areas remain limited. The United Nations should promote gender role modelling, taking into consideration the perspective of developing countries in post-conflict situations.

The Security Council, in accordance with its mandate should continue to address the root cause of violence against women in armed conflict. At the same time, the role of women should continue to be promoted in sustaining peace following conflict.

For those reasons, Indonesia very much welcomes the Council's adoption of resolution 1889 (2009) earlier today.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mrs. Kavun (Ukraine): Let me thank you, Mr. President, and the delegation of Viet Nam for organizing this open meeting and giving the Council and Member States an opportunity to have a broad exchange of views on such an important issue: the empowerment of women for sustainable peace and security.

We would also like to commend the determined efforts of the Security Council members aimed at finding effective ways to protect women and to ensure their full participation in endeavours to maintain peace and security. In this regard, we express our support for Security Council resolution 1888 (2009), adopted last month under the presidency of the United States.

Ukraine fully aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union, and, in line with the Union, considers gender equality, gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women not only as important objectives, but also as the means to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and an essential part of the development agenda.

Ukraine, as a non-permanent member of the Council back in 2000, was one of 15 countries that voted in favour of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). This decision of the Council, no doubt, was and is the milestone document on empowerment of women. We welcome the most recent report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of that resolution (S/2009/465) and support its recommendations. At the same time, my country shares concerns expressed by the Secretary-General regarding the lack of implementation of the resolution.

The question before us today is a complex one. In response to the increased targeting of women and other civilians that has become a shameful instrument of contemporary warfare, the international community has done a lot, but much still remains to be done. The Security Council has adopted several resolutions on the protection of children and civilians in armed conflict, wherein it urged all parties to take special measures to protect women and girls from rape and other forms of sexual violence.

However, in spite of all international efforts, women continue to be the most vulnerable victims of armed conflict, targeted for the most brutal forms of sexual violence. In addition to that, women also experience the trauma of losing relatives and friends in times of armed conflict and of having to take responsibility for the care of surviving family members. They also constitute the majority of refugees and displaced persons.

My country is greatly concerned about this situation and strongly condemns the targeting of women and girls in situations of armed conflict. In this regard, we welcome the Security Council's efforts to pay a special attention to the particular needs of women affected by armed conflict when considering action aimed at promoting peace and security.

It is important that the Secretary-General's reports to the Council dealing with specific conflict situations and developments in the field also incorporate gender perspectives in addressing various aspects of conflict analysis and conflict resolution. It is

also important to be sure that personnel involved in United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations have appropriate training on the protection, rights and particular needs of women. Security Council resolutions setting up or extending peacekeeping operations should provide a clear mandate to address the protection of women and girls affected by conflict against all sexual violence, abduction, enforced prostitution, trafficking and threats imposed by military, paramilitary and other groups.

We believe that the Security Council has a special responsibility to support women's participation in peace processes by ensuring appropriate gender balance in United Nations peacekeeping missions. We welcome the fact that the Council has already recognized the important role of women in conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding and has emphasized the importance of promoting an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes when addressing armed or other conflicts.

The presence of women in United Nations missions can foster confidence and trust among the local population, which are critical elements in any peacekeeping mission. In performing their tasks, women are perceived to be compassionate, unwilling to opt for force over reconciliation and ready to listen and learn, and they are widely seen as contributors to an environment of stability and morality that fosters the progress of peace.

At the same time, women are still underrepresented in decision-making with regard to conflict. Their initiatives and visions for peace and security are rarely heard during peace negotiations. In this regard, I would like to stress that women should not be viewed primarily as victims of armed conflict; the international community should use the potential of women as agents of preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

Being an active participant in United Nations peacekeeping efforts, Ukraine has for years been contributing women civilian police and military observers to United Nations peacekeeping missions. We reiterate our readiness to continue working constructively with other Members States in order to ensure the protection of women in armed conflicts and women's participation in peace processes.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. Puri (India): Let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council.

We are happy to participate in today's open debate on women and peace and security. The theme of today's discussion, namely, "Women and peace and security: responding to the needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations for sustainable peace and security", is both timely and pertinent. India attaches very high importance to ensuring concrete action in this area, and welcomes the report (S/2009/465) of the Secretary-General.

We co-sponsored resolution 1888 (2009), which was adopted last week under the presidency of the United States. We were also happy to co-sponsor resolution 1889 (2009), which was adopted today. Nevertheless, let me underscore that the issue of women and peace and security has implications that are cross-cutting, as well as multi-dimensional. Therefore, the need to discuss those issues in the universal forum — the General Assembly — cannot be over-emphasized.

India has consistently held that greater participation by women in areas of conflict prevention, peace negotiations, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction is the sine qua non condition for lasting peace and security. As far as the United Nations is concerned, its achievements have been at best modest, in particular in terms of the deployment of women in peacekeeping forces. Women currently comprise only 8 per cent of United Nations police officers, and about 2 per cent of the military personnel, deployed in United Nations peacekeeping operations. Given the critical role of the United Nations in peacekeeping operations and peacebuilding in post-conflict countries, we firmly believe that the United Nations must lead by example. Precisely for those reasons, India has contributed a female peacekeeping unit of 100 personnel, which is at present deployed in Liberia. That mission in Liberia stands out as the only one of its kind among the ongoing United Nations peacekeeping operations.

We commend the work of the Secretary-General in mainstreaming the gender perspective in the United Nations recruitment process. We hope that that process will be institutionalized at the earliest possible time, and that we will achieve a gender balance in the United

Nations system, especially in the field, where is it most urgently required. There is also great need to ensure greater representation of women in high decision-making positions at the United Nations.

It is a matter of deep regret that the international community has to repeatedly debate the issue of sexual and other forms of violence against women and girls in situations of armed conflict. That abhorrent behaviour has to be unequivocally, unambiguously and resolutely condemned, whether it is perpetrated by parties to armed conflicts, peacekeeping personnel, including its civilian component, or humanitarian actors.

The promotion and protection of the human rights of women and girls in armed conflict continues to pose a pressing challenge. There should be no tolerance for gender-based violence. All cases of gender-based violence in an armed conflict must be investigated, and the perpetrators prosecuted. Let me assure the Council that India will continue to contribute positively to United Nations efforts to protect vulnerable groups, in particular women and children, in conflict and post-conflict societies. That needs to be done in a comprehensive manner and with the active involvement of all the departments and agencies of the United Nations. I would also like to stress that the international community needs to enhance cooperation by providing new and additional financial resources and by sharing experiences, expertise and capacity building in areas of justice and rule of law.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Sierra Leone.

Mr. Touray (Sierra Leone): As you know, Mr. President, Sierra Leone is in the labyrinth of a post-conflict situation. We are also on the Council's agenda. We therefore welcome the convening of another meeting on the issue of women and peace and security, which this time focuses on measures taken to respond to the needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations. I would like to thank you, Sir, for taking the initiative. I also congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October. My thanks also go to the entire membership of the Council and to the Secretary-General for their continued engagement in promoting and protecting the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution, peacebuilding and the fight against sexual violence in armed conflict.

I would also like to register my delegation's thoughts and sincere condolences to the peoples of the two Samoas, Indonesia and the Philippines after the recent disasters that have befallen their communities.

As we meet today to evaluate the progress made so far in the implementation of this historic resolution, my delegation is delighted to note that much progress has been made in the implementation of the relevant resolutions adopted in that regard at the levels of our individual countries, the United Nations and other related institutions. We are particularly encouraged by the collective resolve over the years to address the issue of gender equality and the advancement and empowerment of women, which is evident in the number of resolutions and presidential statements adopted by the Council alone, not to mention those adopted by the General Assembly.

Almost two months ago, on 7 August, we met in the Chamber to assess the progress we have all made in implementing resolution 1820 (2008), which was adopted in June of last year and pertained to the use of sexual violence in armed conflict. During that debate, we provided a detailed account of our own experience with sexual exploitation and abuse, which was used as a tactic of war by the belligerent forces during our decade-long civil war. We also highlighted the legislative and administrative measures adopted to address that scourge, as well as the challenges faced in their implementation.

We made concrete proposals on how we could work in concert to prevent and respond to sexual violence, including with regard to the need to appoint a Special Representative of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security to lead our collective response to the use of sexual violence in armed conflict. That is why we wholeheartedly welcome the recent adoption, on 30 September, of resolution 1888 (2009) to complement resolution 1820 (2008), which was the first-ever resolution to recognize the threats posed by sexual violence to the maintenance of sustainable peace and security. We further reiterate our support for the Secretary-General's call for the appointment of a Special Representative to enhance effective coordination.

In addition to the international human rights instruments dedicated to the promotion and protection of the rights and welfare of women and children that we have ratified, Sierra Leone, as a post-conflict

country, has continued to demonstrate its strong commitment to promoting the agenda of women and girls by mainstreaming their concerns into our national development policies, programmes and plans — as evident in our setting up of a ministry devoted to the affairs of women and children, the adoption of a national policy on both gender mainstreaming and the advancement of women, the amendment of laws considered to be discriminatory against women, as well as the inclusion of this issue into our poverty reduction strategy paper.

Consistent with those commitments, and with a view to ensuring that our hard-earned peace and democracy are sustained, we have continued to adopt practical measures to respond to the needs of our women and girls, especially in areas such as decision-making and women's full participation in, and ownership of, peacebuilding and recovery processes, health, education, protection against abuse, exploitation and violence and combating HIV/AIDS.

Driven by the conviction that, as principal victims of war, women and their children should be brought on board in peacemaking, peacebuilding and peace consolidation processes, as well as with regard to national recovery, some practical measures have been taken by our Government along those lines. In the years since the Lomé Peace Agreement and the Beijing Conference, there has been considerable improvement in the status of women in Sierra Leone at the national, regional and international levels vis-à-vis their participation in public affairs.

There has also been an increase in women's representation in decision-making positions. Women are now appointed to important ministerial positions in the areas of foreign affairs, gender and housing. They were already represented in 2000 in the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning. Women have headed important Government commissions, such as the National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights and, quite recently, the National Electoral Commission. They have also been appointed chairpersons of strategic parastatal bodies and given ambassadorial positions. As I speak, we now have more female heads of chancery in our diplomatic missions than ever before.

In the security sector, one of the steps we have taken to demonstrate our commitment to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) was to establish an institution known as Women in Security Sector-Sierra Leone, which has a mandate to promote the issue of women, peace and security. As a further demonstration of our commitment to see women in management positions in the security sector, a female combatant officer was promoted to the rank of brigadier and appointed assistant chief of defence staff for personnel and training. Similarly, a senior female police officer is now the assistant inspector-general of police for professional standards.

Producing a child-friendly version of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report was meant to increase the involvement of children in the process.

The 50/50 Group, a non-partisan organization that works to increase women's influence in public policy through sensitization has improved the public perception of women in politics. In its drive for gender equality, it has brought on board other partners to look into laws that are discriminatory against women.

In 2002 and 2004 we organized a series of nation-wide training programmes for female aspirants to both parliamentary and local government elections. The training was meant to provide female aspirants with the relevant skills to overcome some of the barriers that have over the years inhibited them from taking an active part in politics. We are also raising awareness for a 30 per cent quota for women's representation in the Cabinet.

In 2001, we embarked upon setting up a task force for women in politics within the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs to work on reducing barriers to women's participation in politics, increase the registration of women voters and advocate for women's political empowerment. However, the task force, which would have been in a better position to lobby and advocate for an increase in the participation of women in public activities, could not be sustained owing to the lack of funds.

It is also important to note the Government's support for the Mano River Women's Peace Network, an organization comprised of women from Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone that has worked to complement nationally driven initiatives to consolidate peace, prevent future conflicts and restore the confidence needed to establish sustainable peace and security, not only in the Mano River Basin but also in Africa as a whole.

A major priority of my Government has been a commitment to ensure that our women and girls enjoy the highest attainable standards of health in our bid to achieve the objective of healthy living. In that regard, we have continued to take initiatives that are consistent with Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5 by embarking upon extensive programmes to enhance maternal and infant health care. The sensitization campaign on immunization, family planning, obstetric care and the training of traditional birth attendants, among other actions, is contributing to a reduction in maternal and infant mortality rates.

Even in the face of the current global economic meltdown, the Government of Sierra Leone has not relented in adopting measures to mitigate the impact of the crisis on health care delivery services for our women and girls by adopting a gender-sensitive response to the issue. The Government of Sierra Leone has made commitments to support the right of women and girls to basic health care delivery services. For instance, quite recently, at a high-level event on the sidelines of the general debate that was co-hosted by the British Prime Minister and the President of the World Bank on the theme "Investing in Our Common Future: Healthy Women, Healthy Children — More money for health and more health for the money", President Ernest Bai Koroma of Sierra Leone made a commitment to launch a new health sector strategic plan to respond to challenges such as the high cost of drugs and inadequate facilities and health care delivery services, in particular for those residing in rural areas. The President views those challenges as detrimental to his agenda for change in the area of health; and thus the need for the new health policy sector strategic plan, which is intended to achieve the following.

First, the plan aims to introduce a fair health care financing mechanism that includes the protection of women and children through the abolition of fees charged for services. Secondly, it is intended to move us towards universal coverage, especially with regard to safe motherhood and child health. Thirdly, it will endeavour to improve collaboration with partners, including in strengthening the transparency and accountability of health spending and in enhancing accountability to citizens. In order to achieve those priorities, the President also pledged to increase health sector spending to the 15 per cent target of the Abuja Declaration.

Under the Roll Back Malaria programme, the President of Sierra Leone joined other African leaders to launch an African leaders' malaria alliance. At the same time, he made another commitment to defeat malaria, which is a major killer of children and women, and in particular of pregnant women.

We have made significant strides in the area of education by adopting affirmative action to promote girl-child education — a measure taken to eliminate gender disparity in education. In order to translate that into reality, we have introduced free and compulsory primary education and created incentives to encourage the retention of girls in schools. That has led to a higher primary school enrolment of girls in recent years.

In addressing the need for those children whose educations were interrupted by the war, or who never had the opportunity to attend school, we have modified some of our education programmes to cater to children 10 to 15 years of age by introducing a programme providing complimentary rapid education for primary schools, in which the normal six-year primary education programme has been compressed to three years in order to give beneficiaries an opportunity to eventually join the formal education system.

Several other measures taken to eliminate gender disparity and promote the education of the girl child have also yielded positive results. For instance, more parents are now proud to send their girls to school, even in regions of the country that were previously against the education of girls.

I do not wish to repeat all that was said in the previous debate on the use of sexual violence in armed conflict. Rather, I would like to place on record the following additional measures taken to contain that phenomenon.

First, with assistance from UNICEF and other development partners, we have worked to reunite war-affected children with their families and have been able to successfully reintegrate them into their communities. Secondly, we have set up a couple of technical and vocational training institutions in most areas in the country to keep them gainfully engaged. Thirdly, we have enacted a law against human trafficking to address the problem of human trafficking and abduction as a cross-cutting issue.

The global fight against the HIV and AIDS pandemic remains a priority of the Government of Sierra Leone. That is why we see the move to develop policies and guidelines relating to children and HIV and AIDS, such as support for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission, as well as pediatric care, as appropriate and timely.

With barely a year until the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) in October 2010, we in Sierra Leone still believe that, in spite of the gains accrued thus far, there is still a need for more action if we are to fully implement resolution 1325 (2000) and other relevant resolutions.

For our part, given our post-conflict situation, much has been done to promote and protect the rights of our women and girls. Nonetheless, we earnestly believe that we still need to do more if our women and girls are to fully enjoy their inalienable right to a life free of discrimination, abuse and exploitation. Achieving women's full and equal participation and representation at all levels of Government, in Parliament and in the judiciary, which already headed by a female chief justice and with no less than three female Supreme Court judges and a woman heading the Office of Administrator and Registrar General, is still a major objective of our Government.

The capacity of our national machinery for the advancement of women is, however, restricted by a lack of much-needed human and financial resources. Health and education facilities remain inadequate, especially in rural areas. Cultural practices that favour boys over girls still exist, though on a minimal scale. We have yet to introduce human rights education, which has the potential to increase the quality of education and respect for all in the learning environment, into our school curriculum. The increasing number of street children, especially child hawkers, those orphaned by AIDS and other vulnerable young people, has become a critical issue, particularly in the face of the HIV and AIDS pandemic. There is also a need to pay attention to the matter of training personnel to deal with issues such as human trafficking, juvenile justice and the sexual abuse of children.

In the light of these constraints, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to thank all our development partners for their continued support for our efforts at empowering our women and at transforming them from victims of sexual abuse, violence and exploitation into respected members of our global community. Only through sustained collaborative efforts can we succeed in promoting their rights and contain gender-based violence. That is why we will always recognize the role of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, in efforts to make women and gender issues central to the peacebuilding agenda of the United Nations.

Let me conclude on the note that, as a nation emerging from a conflict situation, Sierra Leone has done much indeed to promote and protect the needs of our women and girls. With continued political will and commitment, we earnestly believe that we can still do more with the available resources given the right level of international support, assistance and collaboration.

The President: I again request speakers to kindly limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. I thank representatives for their understanding and cooperation.

I now give the floor to the representative of Serbia.

Mr. Starčević (Serbia): Let me first thank the Security Council for the opportunity to address it today on the very important topic of responding to the needs of women and girls in post-conflict societies. I would also like to thank the President of the Council, Mr. Le Luong Minh, Ambassador of Viet Nam, and the delegation of Viet Nam for organizing this open debate. My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union, and I will therefore limit myself to a few remarks on the issue.

Several side events held during the course of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly, such as the marking of the sixtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Geneva Conventions, the ministerial meetings on the implementation of the Paris Commitments and on violence against girls, as well as the adoption of resolution 1888 (2009) on women and peace and security in this body last week, have clearly indicated the need for more concerted and decisive action at the national and international levels in dealing with the most vulnerable population in conflict and post-conflict societies.

My country joined the sponsors of resolution 1888 (2009), thus expressing its determination and commitment to work with the international community, as well as at the national level, on the full implementation of the cornerstone resolution 1325 (2000), the tenth anniversary of whose adoption we will commemorate next year, and of all subsequent Security Council resolutions on that issue. I believe that resolution 1889 (2009), adopted today, will further contribute to our common goals of eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls, improving women's participation in post-conflict planning and peacebuilding, and their full participation in decision-making.

The last decade of the twentieth century was marked by intolerance, violence and conflicts in the region of the former Yugoslavia. Vulnerable groups, such as women, children, the elderly and others, were indeed the most affected by those tragic events. Even today, 10 years after the countries of the South-Eastern European region significantly improved their cooperation in their advance towards membership of the European Union, Serbia continues to provide shelter to more than 90,000 refugees from neighbouring countries and over 200,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) from our southern province of Kosovo, many of whom are single mothers, girls and older women.

Serbia has spared no efforts in providing assistance and support to these populations during their protracted displacement. We firmly believe that there is a need for a more visible and substantial engagement of the international community in the province of Kosovo, as well as stronger regional cooperation, to find a durable and sustainable solution for the refugees and IDPs.

With the painful experience of conflict behind us and after the democratic changes in the Republic of Serbia, my country has embarked upon a comprehensive process of democratic reforms in the fields of the economy, justice, security and human rights. In those processes, the empowerment of women through their full engagement in decision-making has been recognized as vital to the ongoing reforms. During the past 10 years, we have made significant efforts to ensure greater representation of women in Parliament and other decision-making bodies.

Today, in Serbia, women hold many high-ranking positions in all three branches of the Government. The Speaker of Parliament, as well as the Ministers of Finance, Justice and Youth and Sports, are women. The increase in the number of women in the judiciary is also significant. The Presidents of the Constitutional Court and of the Supreme Court are women. Women judges are dealing with the most sensitive cases, such as processing war crimes, organized crime and corruption. The presence of women in the police and the military is also increasing.

Bearing in mind the importance of the engagement of women in peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding operations, the Republic of Serbia has so far deployed 14 women in its contingents in several United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Last but not least, recognizing the significance of the role of civil society in addressing the issues of women and girls in post-conflict situations, I would like to mention that in Serbia there is a very vibrant network of non-governmental organizations led by women, who are very active in addressing the issues of war crimes, transitional justice and reconciliation.

In conclusion, let me assure the Council that the Republic of Serbia will continue to support the efforts of the Security Council on these important issues and that we will strive to contribute to the full implementation of its resolutions, including the one adopted today.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands.

Mr. Schaper (Netherlands): Let me begin by aligning myself with the statement delivered by the representative of the presidency of the European Union (EU), as well as by thanking you, Mr. President, for making this an open debate. The very large number of speakers today makes clear the importance that the membership of the United Nations as a whole attaches to the subject of women and peace and security.

There are two dimensions to this subject. The first one is women and girls as victims of violence. As the discussion in the Security Council last week again made clear (see S/PV.6195), such violence is often employed as a weapon of war. That necessitates a different way of operating in crisis management and peacekeeping. For instance, military patrols need to take place between villages and water points at the

crack of dawn to protect women fetching water. We also need to be aware that brutal forms of violence against women in sudden outbreaks of violence can be early warning signs of instability.

But even women who have been violated have a voice. These are not merely voices of victims, but voices of citizens who want to contribute directly to conflict prevention, the maintenance of peace and post-conflict reconstruction in their countries. That is the second dimension: the empowerment of women in matters of peace and war.

We therefore welcome resolution 1888 (2009), which the Council adopted last week, as well as resolution 1889 (2009), which was adopted today and which the Netherlands would have wished to sponsor. That is because those resolutions give women more of a voice in these matters — for example, through the country reports to the Security Council. They also give us new tools, such as the set of indicators that the Secretary-General is requested to submit for use at the global level to track implementation. These can be very useful for monitoring progress and for results-oriented planning.

Furthermore, we welcome the fact that, in the resolution adopted this morning, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office are encouraged to systematically include women in peacebuilding efforts and to improve the participation of women in political and economic decision-making from the earliest stages of the peacebuilding process. But enhancing the role of women in matters of peace and war is not limited in its impact to countries in which conflicts take place or have taken place, it also has consequences for the other Members of the United Nations.

As far as military operations are concerned, a study by Sweden, Norway, Finland and the Netherlands on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in the provincial reconstruction teams in Afghanistan showed, among other things, that the effectiveness of the International Security Assistance Force in cooperating with, and winning the trust of, the Afghan population is improved if the armed forces of troop-contributing nations include more women. Incorporating more women into armed forces is an important element of a coherent and comprehensive approach to the issue that we are discussing today. A seminar being organized by Spain and the Netherlands, to take place on 13 and 14 October in Madrid, will focus on how to make progress in that respect.

This also implies working closely with civil society in our countries, as we are doing in the Netherlands. We have had a very positive experience in working together with non-governmental organizations, both in developing and implementing and monitoring our national action plan.

As far as our bilateral cooperation with other countries is concerned, let me give the Council two examples. Burundi and the Netherlands collaborate in the integration of elements of resolution 1325 (2000) into the ethics training course for Burundi's uniformed services. And in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Netherlands supports the establishment of collective funding arrangements to address sexual and gender-based violence under the stabilization plan for that country, in collaboration with its Government and with other donors.

Let me end by underlining that our discussion today forms part of the wider debate on gender issues and should also be seen in the light of the decision by the General Assembly to establish a United Nations composite gender entity (see General Assembly resolution 63/311). We look forward to an early proposal on the details of that entity, including regarding its cooperation with the relevant advisers and special representatives. The coherence of United Nations efforts with regard to gender issues should be ensured. We therefore expect the swift appointment of the new Under-Secretary-General. As the Swedish Ambassador said earlier today in his statement on behalf of the EU, we must not lose momentum on this matter.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Ecuador.

Mr. Morejón (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Over the past 60 years, the United Nations has played a central role in combating all forms of discrimination and violence against women. It has also made a contribution to redoubling efforts to promote gender equality, and in particular to the establishment of an internationally agreed normative framework that provides guidance for the efforts of Governments and other stakeholders. In following up those efforts, Ecuador has ratified every relevant international treaty. We have also sponsored various General Assembly resolutions on this issue.

The Security Council's adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) marked a milestone in acknowledging the importance of mainstreaming the gender perspective at all stages of a peace process. That resolution also reflected the Council's interest in the situation of boys and girls in armed conflict, the protection of civilians and the prevention of conflict.

Ecuador has taken due note of the first report (S/2009/362) of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 1820 (2008), which refers to various efforts by States to eradicate this evil. Despite the significant efforts led by the Secretary-General and the Security Council, Ecuador believes that it is urgent to achieve greater cooperation among the principal organs of the United Nations, bearing in mind that the General Assembly is the universal body charged with providing a normative framework to guide the decisions of all States.

Ecuador believes that all Member States, as well as the United Nations system, should more coherently and systematically apply international law and implement the programmes and policies aimed at combating ongoing complex problems hindering the achievement of the rights of women. Since 2008, my country has had a new constitutional framework that lays the foundations for participatory democracy. The preamble of our Constitution also acknowledges the rights of women and provides for a way to move from equality on paper to genuine equality by identifying how those who have been victims of inequality and discrimination due to tradition, history, culture or religious attitudes are to be treated.

In conclusion, allow me to emphasize that, in an effort to ensure equality between men and women, Ecuador is working to identify the most appropriate way of setting up a national gender equality council.

The challenges are numerous. But there is a reality that must be changed. Allow me, therefore, to reiterate the decision of the Government and the people of Ecuador to continue to cooperate with the international community to ensure the right of women to lives free from violence and to guarantee their full participation in mediation and negotiation processes, all aspects of peacekeeping operations, the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the post-conflict reconstruction process.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Ms. Medina-Carrasco (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and to thank you for organizing this important debate on a most important issue.

We should like our statement to serve as a reflection on this issue. We are concerned at the tone of a number of statements, and we should like our delegation's statement on behalf of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to be properly understood.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is respectful of the norms of international law and the commitments undertaken in that context. Violations of women's human rights, given their many social, economic and political implications, undermine human coexistence and constitute serious crimes that compromise the dignity of women, as established in various instruments of international law. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reaffirms its clear and firm commitment to promoting and respecting women's human rights and its support for the elimination of all forms of violence against women, including sexual violence.

Venezuela believes that all relevant United Nations human rights entities should address the problems experienced by women in situations of armed conflict. We draw attention to the role that should be played by the Human Rights Council in that regard.

We express our concern, however, at the fact that the Security Council continues to address General Assembly agenda items, which are outside the scope of its purview. That does not contribute to the adequate and balanced consideration of such items.

With regard to peacekeeping operations, we believe that the Security Council cannot be both judge and party. We are concerned at the possibility that, under article 16 of the Rome Statute, the Council could indefinitely stall an investigation or proceedings being conducted by the International Criminal Court in this area, particularly when agents or officials of a permanent Council member are involved. We are referring in particular to the Council member that denies the Court's competence and demands that countries into which it makes military incursions grant diplomatic immunity to its agents and its military and security personnel. That situation strongly promotes

impunity for serious crimes against women and children. This is an aspect that should be of concern to all United Nations Member States.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela fully supports all efforts made within the General Assembly, its funds and its programmes to ensure the comprehensive consideration of the advancement of women and their genuine empowerment in the context of an egalitarian and just society that respects their rights.

The President: I now call on the representative of Colombia.

Mr. Montoya (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October. We thank you for issuing the concept paper (S/2009/490, annex) serving as the basis for today's discussion.

Colombia's experience demonstrates the importance of implementing gender strategies that include the social, economic and cultural dimensions, among other factors. Thus, since 2003, the national Government has been carrying out an affirmative policy that ensures women's empowerment in all areas. For example, mindful of the particular needs of women at the local level, we are promoting the establishment and enhancement of women's community councils, which are spaces for discussion in departments and municipalities, created to increase their participation and increase the visibility of the role that they play in development in their regions. This tool links women to the Government's policies and programmes, promotes development with gender equity and encourages or strengthens gender mainstreaming processes at the regional level.

In that connection, we are advancing the rural women's agenda, which includes actions to enhance respect for and guarantee the effective enjoyment of rural women's rights. The Office of the Adviser on Women's Equality, a governmental entity, has launched a project to increase the visibility of and enhance the situation of indigenous women, young women and girls, as part of the policy entitled "Women: Builders of Peace and Development". To that end, three regional laboratories and a central forum have been established to create spaces for dialogue and raise awareness about the importance of the efforts being made by women in their communities. The space created for dialogue between the Office of the Adviser and the indigenous women participating in the three laboratories is contributing to the development of a joint programme of work that includes efforts being made by women in their own areas. The goal is to develop an affirmative action plan for indigenous peoples, with an emphasis on women.

In addition, with the support of the European Union and citizen support, the programme Laboratories of Peace has been established in violence-affected areas. Through the programme, with the tools of the rule of law, we are exploring courses of action that Colombian society and local communities must take to address violence and promote sustainable development. Women are benefiting from and/or carrying out projects to promote peace in their areas.

In the peacebuilding process, entities of the Colombian State are working together to ensure the inclusion of a gender-based perspective, as well as full participation by women in violence prevention.

Furthermore, we have developed guidelines for assistance to displaced persons, taking a gender-based approach. The objective of the guidelines is to assist in consolidating public policy aimed at displaced persons, in order to provide effective assistance that meets the specific needs of women and addresses the impact of displacement on them. The guidelines were based on three guiding principles: participation, a rules-based approach and a gender-based approach. They are structured around three phases: prevention and protection, emergency humanitarian assistance, and socio-economic stabilization.

Additionally, the State has made efforts to ensure access to justice and special protection for women victims of displacement and sexual violence perpetrated by illegal groups. The Office of the General Prosecutor is promoting a comprehensive action strategy to uphold the fundamental rights of women victims. The programme is based on a specific methodology to address the impact of this phenomenon on Colombian women.

Our national policy for the social and economic reintegration of those who have left illegal armed groups seeks to ensure that institutional actions fully incorporate a gender-based approach. In particular, assistance to women, children and ethnic minorities in the reintegration process is taken into account by identifying the characteristics of population groups and

promoting the family's dynamic role in the process. Likewise, we are carrying out a programme to prevent violence in families that include reintegrated persons.

Strengthening the role and the capacity of women, as well as respect for their rights, is a central aspect for the Government of Colombia. In such efforts, the assistance of the United Nations system and the international community is essential. My country, as a member of the group Friends of 1325, will continue to closely follow developments in the area of women and peace and security. Colombia reaffirms its commitment to the implementation of policies, plans and programmes that broaden and strengthen the role of women in peacebuilding.

The President: I now call on the representative of the Federated States of Micronesia.

Mr. Lippwe (Federated States of Micronesia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Pacific small island developing States represented at the United Nations, namely, Fiji, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Tonga, Vanuatu and my own country, the Federated States of Micronesia. I wish to start by thanking the Viet Nam presidency of the Security Council for convening this important event. We acknowledge and welcome the progress that has been made in implementing resolution 1325 (2000) as outlined in the Secretary-General's report on women and peace and security (S/2009/465). In particular, we note that there has been progress in developing the capacity of both Member States and United Nations bodies to implement the resolution. Awareness of the issue of women and peace and security and the capacity to address that issue on the ground are of course critical to successful implementation, and we encourage the focus on this matter.

However, as the Secretary-General's report notes and as the distinguished speakers before me have also remarked today, much work remains to be done to achieve implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We note with concern that significant progress is still needed to ensure the equal and substantive participation of women at all levels in peace and security decision-making, particularly in negotiations in post-conflict situations. And we are deeply concerned that peace agreement negotiations and planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration continue to take place with little consideration of resolution 1325 (2000).

In overcoming the obstacles to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), the Pacific small island developing States strongly support the need identified in the Secretary-General's report to establish effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms for implementation at the global, regional and national levels and for the Security Council to establish these mechanisms as a matter of urgency. Without such mechanisms we consider it difficult to make further substantive progress. This should be part of an overall strengthened effort, with increased funding, on the part of the Security Council, as well as all United Nations bodies and Member States, to implement resolution 1325 (2000). Also, in order to provide a more coordinated approach to the work on women and peace and security, we support the appointment by the Secretary-General of a special representative for this area.

In discussing the needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations under the general topic of implementing resolution 1325 (2000), it is critical to consider prevention of conflict situations, particularly in relation to the security implications of climate change. Unabated climate change risks increased violent conflict in many parts of the world, with its consequent impact on women and girls, potentially beyond the capacity of the international community to adequately respond.

The Pacific small island developing States raised the issue of the link between climate change and security last year at the open debate on women and peace and security convened by the Security Council under the presidency of the People's Republic of China. Since then, we have seen the unanimous adoption of General Assembly resolution 63/281 relating to the possible security implications of climate change. This was the first time that the international community recognized an explicit connection between climate change and international peace and security. Pursuant to paragraph 2 of the resolution, the Secretary-General will prepare a report on this matter, and we thank him sincerely for his work on this important issue. We would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Governments of Finland and Liberia for organizing the successful High-Level Event on peace and security through women's leadership held in New York last month.

Climate change has adverse effects on the distribution and quality of natural resources such as fresh water, arable land, coastal territory and marine resources. Such changes can increase competition for available resources, weaken Government institutions and lead to internal and international migration. Furthermore, such adverse effects can create obstacles that substantially interfere with the ability of nations to maintain territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence. These effects of climate change create a severe risk of increased violent conflict in many parts of the world, and along with it the consequent impact on women and girls, both during and after conflict. We consider that climate change severely jeopardizes implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Our understanding of the directions taken by the Secretary-General in his forthcoming report on the possible security implications of climate change is that he emphasizes the need to focus on ways to prevent such security issues, and we fully support that approach. By adequately responding to the climate crisis, the international community could prevent likely conflict situations triggered by climate change, thus protecting the rights of women and children. This is an opportunity that we must seize. In addition, we reiterate our call for climate change and security to be an annual item on the United Nations agenda and for a focal point to be established within the Organization to monitor and respond to the growing security implications of climate change. If the United Nations responds to the threat of climate change, it has the potential to truly prevent conflict and thereby reduce violence against women.

The Pacific small island developing States confirm their commitment to the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), and with the support of all Member States, we are hopeful of further advancement as we move towards the resolution's tenth anniversary.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Tete Antonio, Acting Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, to speak.

Mr. Antonio (African Union): Mr. President, on behalf of the African Union, I wish to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council, and I join previous speakers in commending you for organizing this open debate. Our appreciation also goes to Ambassador Rice for the excellent work she has done during the month of September. We are also grateful to the various speakers who briefed the Council this morning.

As I am participating in a Council meeting for the first time in my new capacity as Acting Permanent Observer of the African Union, I would like to take this opportunity to state our gratitude to the Council for the support and cooperation accorded my predecessor, Mrs. Lila Ratsif Andrihamanana. The African Union also deeply appreciates the attention this Council continues to devote to issues of concern to Africa, and I look forward to working with the Council.

The African Union welcomes open meetings such as the one we are holding today, since this enables us to share information on successes, opportunities and lessons learned and to reflect together on the new synergies needed to improve the content and delivery of concrete action in the field. In this connection and in support of the earlier statement by the Netherlands, the African Union welcomes as a major step forward General Assembly resolution 63/311 authorizing the establishment of a composite agency on gender equality to be headed by an Under-Secretary-General, and urges the Security Council to lend its full support to the Secretary-General's efforts in this area in the coming period.

We are also pleased that next year's tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) coincides with the start of the African Women's Decade, 2010-2020, declared by the Assembly of the African Union in January 2009, and which we hope will also open other avenues for further strengthening cooperation between our two organizations in working toward greater gender equality.

Turning to the specific topic of today's debate, the African Union has continued to develop specific policies and institutional capacity for addressing the challenges women face during conflict and its aftermath. Key measures taken include the strengthening of the African Women's Committee on Peace and Development and the adoption of the African Union Gender Policy by the Assembly of the Union in January this year. The Policy stresses the need to reinforce respect, equality and the human dignity of men and women in all areas, and to enforce zero tolerance for gender-based violence, sexual harassment, assault, rape, gender stereotyping, sexism and abusive language, in particular in situations of conflict. It further stresses the need to ensure adequate

sanction and punishment for such acts, and underscores the need for the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). It also stresses that the Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups should be used as the basis for programmatic interventions in Africa, which must include measures to prevent sexual abuse as a weapon in armed conflict.

The African Union Gender Policy also calls for the mobilization of women leaders to participate in peace mediation and related processes, an objective that has been mentioned by many speakers in this open debate. The African Union is further committed under the Policy to working to address human and drug trafficking and to articulate gender perspectives relating to child labour, prostitution and abuse.

I should now like to focus on the opportunities and challenges which lie on the path ahead, in particular from the perspective of peace and security. First, we have been greatly honoured by the leadership and important contributions of women in Member States such as Mozambique, Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Networks of women have also been involved in the northern Uganda peace talks in Juba and in ongoing efforts for lasting peace and security in the Sudan and Somalia. However, I should like to underscore the need to strengthen the involvement of women in such processes. Concrete actions must be taken to ensure that the lessons learnt thus far are fully integrated into the cooperative efforts being made by the United Nations and regional organizations for the maintenance of international peace and security. This includes the participation of women in peacekeeping operations at all levels.

Secondly, we in the African Union face the challenge of ensuring that our emerging peace and security architecture — which includes the African Standby Force, the Continental Early Warning System, the Panel of the Wise and our subregional arrangements for peace and security — adequately reflect our vision for women and peace and security. We are determined to address this challenge, and continue to count on the support of the Security Council and our international partners in this respect.

Finally, as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen the mobilization of resources and support peacekeeping operations conducted by regional organizations such as the African Union, we would like to underscore the importance of ensuring that efforts centred on women and peace and security are adequately covered in the strategies to be developed. With these few remarks, I wish to reaffirm our commitment to cooperation with the United Nations and our international partners on this matter and other questions of common interest.

The President: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list.

On behalf of the Vietnamese delegation, I should like to express my deepest appreciation to all representatives, the Secretariat, the interpreters, the camera team and the security personnel for their patience and cooperation in helping us accomplish today's long meeting.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 7.20 p.m.